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TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

X. e. 29

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE,

IN THE YEARS

1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, & 1773.

BY

JAMES BRUCE OF KINNAIRD, ESQ.
F. R. S.

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THE THIRD EDITION,

CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

VOL. VI.

Sola potest Libye turbam præstare malorum,
Ut deceat fugisse viros.
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BOOK VII.—Continued.

CHAP. III.

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Having still some doubt about the propriety of going to Mariam-Ohha, till the king had taken post there, I appointed, with Ayto Confu, to meet him next morning, the 22d, in the plain below the church of Abbo, where is the pass called Semma Confu, the dangerous path, from its being always a place where banditti resort to rob passengers in unsettled times.

In my way through the town, though the day had scarce dawned, numbers of the king's servants, that had come from Tigre, flocked about me with great demonstrations of joy; and by the time I got into the plain below Abbo, I had already collected a strong

party both of horse and foot. This was not my intention; I had set out unarmed, attended only by two Abyssinian servants on horseback, but without lance or shield, and in this manner I intended to present myself to the king as one of the suite of Ayto Confu: but all my endeavours were in vain; and I saw that, making the best of my way, and profiting of the early time of the morning, was the only method left to avoid increasing my retinue. I must own the good disposition of these people to me, and the degree of favour they reported me to be in, and, above all, Ozoro Esther's assurances, had given me great comfort; for several people, of no authority indeed, had prophesied, that Ras Michael would be much offended at my having thrown a carpet over the body of Joas, and at my not having gone to Tigre with him.

I passed the three heaps of stones under which lie the three monks who were stoned to death in the time of David IV.; and at the bottom of the hill, whereon stands the church of Abbo, I was met by Yasine, and about 20 horsemen, having on their coats of mail, their helmets upon their heads, and their viziers down; their pikes perpendicular, with their points in the air, so that by one motion more, placing them horizontally in their rests, they were prepared to charge at a word. I asked Yasine what was the meaning of his being in that equipage in such hot weather, when there was no enemy? He replied, it was given him in orders from Ayto Confu last night; and that, with regard to an enemy, there was one that had seized the pass of Semma Confu, and obstinately refused to let us through, unless we forced them. Sure, said I, Ayto Confu knows, that heavy armed men on horseback are not fit to force passes through craggy mountains, where they may be all killed by rolling stones upon them, without their even seeing their enemy. Strange,

strange, said I, (speaking to myself) that any party should be so audacious as to take post in the king's front, at six miles distance, and put themselves between him and the capital: I am sure they heartily deserve to be cut in pieces, and so they certainly will. Where is Ayto Confu? It was answered by Yasine, That he was gone forward to the mouth of the pass to reconnoitre it, and would meet us there. We marched on accordingly, across the plain, about half a mile; but I was surprised to see all my attendants, that I had picked up by the way, laughing, excepting Yasine's men, and that none of the rest made horse, mule, or gun ready, as if they were in danger; so that I began now strongly to suspect some trick on the part of Confu, as he was much given to jest and sport, being a very young man.

A little before we came to the mouth of the pass, a soldier came to us and asked who we were? and was answered, it was Yasine, Ayto Confu's servant at Ras el Feel. To which it was replied, he knew no such person. He was scarcely gone when another arrived with the same question. I began to be impatient, as the sun was then growing very hot; and answered, it was Yagoube, the white man, the king's friend and servant. I was again answered, no such person could pass there. The third time, being interrogated by one whom I knew to be Ayto Confu's servant, Yasine answered, it is Yagoube, the king's governor of Ras el Feel, with the slave Yasine, the Moor, come to do the king homage, and to die for him, if he commands, in the midst of his enemies. We were answered, he is welcome: upon which the servant, going back, brought a drum, and beat it upon a rock, crying, as in a proclamation, "Yagoube is governor of Ras el Feel, commander of the king's black horse, lord of Geesh, and gentleman of the king's bed-chamber."

Here this farce, the contrivance of Ayto Confu, ended. With him were many more of the king's servants, my old acquaintances, and we all sat down by a spring-well, under the shade of the rock, to a hearty breakfast prepared for us by Ozoro Esther.

After this was finished, with a great deal of cheerfulness, and being ready to get on horseback, we saw a man running towards us in great speed, who, upon his arrival, asked us where the king was, and if we were his Fit-Auraris? To this we made him no answer; but, laying hold of him, obliged him to declare his errand. He said that he was a servant of Negade Ras Mahomet, of Dara, who had apprehended Ayto Confu, brother of Guebra Mehedin, of whom I have spoken at large (never for any good), and that he had brought him along with him. This, miscreant, whom we had found out to be the principal actor and persuader of the robbery of my house, while in a drunken frolic with the wretched Socinios, was now in his way before the king, where, if all his delinquency had been known, he would infallibly have lost his eyes, his life, or both. He was nephew to the Iteghe, as has been already mentioned, son to her brother Basha Eusebius, and consequently cousin-german to Ayto Confu himself, who, with great diffidence, asked me, if I could pardon his cousin, and allow him to be delivered out of Mahomet's hands; which, ill as he deserved of me, I very readily complied with; for I would not for the world have had it thought that I was the occasion of his death, after it had been so often said, though falsely, that I had been the cause of that of his brother. Mahomet delivered him to Confu and me, without hesitation, and promised not to complain to Ras Michael; but he threatened, if ever again he fell into his hands, that he would certainly put him to death, which he well saw would not be very disagree-

able to any of his relations, provided it happened in the field, or any other way than by the hands of a public executioner. Ayto Confu, however, insisted upon bringing him out, and correcting him publicly, though he was by ten years the younger of the two; and the wretch was accordingly severely whipt with wands, and delivered after to a servant of Ozoro Esther's, to conduct him to some safe place, where he might be out of the reach of Ras Michael, at least for a time.

We now got on horseback, and having ordered Yasine and his soldiers to disarm, we all went in the habit of peace, with joyful hearts, to meet the king, who was already arrived at Mariam-Ohha, and was encamped there since about eleven o'clock that forenoon.

My first business was to wait on Ras Michael, who, though very busy, admitted me immediately upon being announced. This was a compliment I was under no necessity of paying him, as the king's servant; but I was resolved to take nothing upon me, but appear in all the humility of a private stranger. This he quickly perceived; so that, when he saw me approaching near him to kiss the ground, he made an effort as if to rise, which he never did, being lame, nor could do without help; stretching out his hand as if to prevent me, he repeated the words in a hurry, *be gzeir! be gzeir!* or, for God's sake, don't! for God's sake, don't! However, the compliment was paid. As soon as I arose, without desiring me to sit down, he asked aloud, Have you seen the king? I said, Not yet. Have you any complaint to make against any one, or grace to ask? I answered, None, but the continuance of your favour. He answered, That I am sure I owe you; go to the king. I took my leave. I had been

jostled and almost squeezed to death attempting to enter, but large room was made me for retiring.

The reception I had met with was the infallible rule according to which the courtiers were to speak to me from that time forward. Man is the same creature everywhere, although different in colour; the court of London and that of Abyssinia are, in their principles, one. I then went immediately to the king, in the presence-chamber. His largest tent was crowded to a degree of suffocation; I resolved, therefore to wait till this throng was over, and was going to my own tent, which my servants pitched near that of Kefla Yasous, by that general's own desire, but before I could reach it, I was called by a servant from the king. Though the throng had greatly decreased, there was still a very crowded circle.

The king was sitting upon an ivory stool, such as are represented upon ancient medals; he had got this as a present from Arabia, since he went to Tigre; he was plainly, but very neatly, dressed, and his hair combed and perfumed. When I kissed the ground before him, "There," says he, "is an arch rebel; what punishment shall we inflict upon him?" "Your majesty's justice," said I, "will not suffer you to inflict any punishment upon me that can possibly equal the pleasure I feel this day at seeing you sitting there." He smiled with great good nature, giving me first the back, and then the palm of his hand to kiss. He then made me a sign to stand in my place, which I immediately did for a moment; and, seeing he was then upon business, which I knew nothing of, I took leave of him, and could not help reflecting, as I went, that, of all the vast multitude then in my sight, I was, perhaps, the only one destitute either of hope or fear.

All Gondar, and the neighbouring towns and villages, had poured out their inhabitants to meet the

king upon his return. The fear of Ras Michael was the cause of all this; and every one trembled, lest, by being absent, he should be thought a favourer of Socinios.

The side of the hill, which slopes gently from Belessen, is here very beautiful; it is covered thick with herbage, down to near the foot, where it ends in broken rocks. The face of this hill is of great extent, exposed to the W. and S. W.; a small, but clear-running stream, rising in Belessen, runs through the middle of it, and falls into the Mogetch. It is not considerable, being but a brook, called Mariam-Ohha (i. e. the water of Mariam), from a church dedicated to the Virgin, near where it rises in Belessen; an infinite number of people spread themselves all over the hill, covered with cotton garments as white as snow. The number could not be less than 50, or 60,000 men and women, all strewed upon the grass promiscuously. Most of these had brought their victuals with them, others trusted to their friends and acquaintances in the army; the soldiers had plenty of meat; as soon as the king had crossed the Tacazze, all was lawful prize; and though they did not murder or burn, as was Michael's custom in his former marches, yet they drove away all the cattle they could seize, either in Begemder or Belessen. Besides this, a great quantity of provisions of every sort poured in from the neighbourhood of Gondar, in presents to the king and great men, though there was really famine in that capital, by the roads being every way obstructed; there was plenty, however, in the camp.

It was then the month of December, the fairest time of the year, when the sun was in the southern tropic, and no danger from rain in the day, nor in the night from dew; so that, if the remembrance of the past had not hung heavy on some hearts, it was

a party of pleasure, of the most agreeable kind, to convoy the king to his capital. The priests from all the convents for many miles round, in dresses of yellow and white cotton, came, with their crosses and drums, in procession, and greatly added to the variety of the scene. Among these were 300 of the monks of Koscam, with their large crosses, and kettle-drums of silver, the gift of the Iteghe in the days of her splendour; at present it was very doubtful what their future fate was to be, after their patroness had fled from Koscam. But what most drew the attention of all ranks of people, was the appearance of the Abuna and Itchegue, whose character, rank, and dignity, exempted them from leaving Gondar to meet the king himself; but they were then in great fear, and in the form of criminals, and were treated with very little respect or ceremony by the soldiers, who considered them as enemies.

It will be remembered, upon a report being spread just after the election of Socinios, that Ras Michael's affairs were taking an adverse turn, while besieging the mountain Haramat; that the Abuna, Itchegue, and Acab Saat, had solemnly excommunicated the king, Ras Michael, and all their adherents, declaring them accursed, and absolving all people from their allegiance to Tecla Haimanout. But as soon as the king began his march from Tigre, application for pardon was made through every channel possible, and it was not without difficulty that Ras Michael could be brought to pardon them, chiefly by the entreaty of Ozoro Esther. But this mortification was prescribed to them as a condition of forgiveness, that they should meet the king at Mariam-Ohha, not with drums and crosses, or a retinue, but in the habit and appearance of supplicants. Accordingly, they both came by the time the king had alighted; but they brought no tent

with them, nor was any pitched for them, nor any honour shewn them.

The Abuna had with him a priest, or monk, on a mule, and two beggarly looking servants on foot; the Itchegue two monks, that looked like servants, distinguished by a cowl only on their heads; they were both kept waiting till past three o'clock, and then were admitted, and sharply rebuked by the Ras; they after went to the king, who presently dismissed them, without saying a word to either, or without allowing them to be seated in his presence, which both of them, by their rank, were entitled to be. I asked the Abuna to make use of my tent to avoid the sun: this he willingly accepted of, was crest-fallen a little, spoke very lowly and familiarly; said he had always a regard for me, which I had no reason to believe; desired me to speak favourably of him before the King and the Ras, which I promised faithfully to do. I ordered coffee, which he drank with great pleasure, during which he gave me several hints, as if he thought his pardon was not completed; and at last asked me directly what were my sentiments, and what I had heard? I said, I believed every thing was favourable as to him and the Itchegue, but I did not know how much farther the king's forgiveness would extend. I know, says he, what you mean; that Abba Salama (curse upon him!) he is the author of it all: What do I know of these black people, who am a stranger, so lately come into the country? and, indeed, he seemed to know very little; for, besides his native Arabic, which he spoke like a peasant, he had not learned one word of any of the various languages used in the country in which he was to live and die. Having finished coffee, I left him speaking to some of his own people; about half an hour afterwards, he went away.

Ras Michael had brought with him from Tigre about 20,000 men, the best soldiers of the empire; about 6000 of them were musqueteers, about 12,000 armed with lances and shields, and about 6000 men had joined them from Gondar; a large proportion of these were horsemen, who were scouring the country in all directions, bringing with them such unhappy people as deserved to be, and were therefore destined for public example.

The short way from Tigre to Gondar was by Lamalmon (that is, the mountain of Samen), and by Woggora. Ayto Tesfos had maintained himself in the government of Samen, since Joas's time, by whom he was appointed; he had continued constantly in enmity with Ras Michael, and had now taken possession of the passes near the Tacazze, so as to cut off all communication between Gondar and Tigre. On the side of Belessen, between Lasta and Begemder, was Ras Michael and his army. Powussen and the Begemder troops cut off the road to Gojam by Foggora and Dara. Ayto Engedan, who was to be considered as an advanced post of Fasil, was at Tshemmera, in the way of the Agow and Maitsha, and Coque Abou Barea on the N. W. side, towards Kuara; so that Gondar was so completely invested, that several of the people died with hunger.

Ras Michael had ordered his own nephew Tecla, and Welleta Michael, the king's master of the household, to endeavour to force their way from Tigre to Woggora, and open that communication, if possible, with Gondar; and for that purpose had left him 4000 men in the province of Sire, on the other side of the Tacazze; and now scarce was his tent pitched at Mariam-Ohha, when he detached Kefla Yasous, with 6000 men, to force a junction with Welleta Michael and Tecla from the Woggora side. Their orders were, if

possible, to draw Tesfos to an engagement, but not to venture to storm him in the mountain; for Tesfos's principal post, the Jews Rock, was inaccessible, where he had plowed and sowed plentifully for his subsistence, and had a quantity of the purest running water at all seasons of the year: to irritate Tesfos more, Kefla Yasous was then named governor of Samen in his place. This brave and active officer had set out immediately for his command, and it was to me the greatest disappointment possible, that I did not see him.

Although Ras Michael had been in council all night, the signal was made to strike the tents at the first dawn of day, and soon after, the whole army was in motion; the council had been in the Ras's tent, not in presence of the king, with whom I had staid the most part of the evening, indeed, till late in the night; he seemed to have lost all his former gaiety, and to be greatly troubled in mind; inquired much about the Iteghe, and Fasil; told me he had sent his assurance of peace to the Iteghe, and desired her not to leave Koscam: but she had returned for answer, that she could not trust Michael, after the threatenings he had sent against her from Tigre. It was observed also, in this day's march, that, contrary to his custom before crossing the Tacazze, he received all that came out to meet him with a sullen countenance, and scarce ever answered or spake to them. Michael also, every day since the same date, had put on a behaviour more and more severe and brutal. He had enough of this at all times.

It was the 23d of December when we encamped on the Mogetch, just below Gondar. This behaviour was so conspicuous to the whole people, that no sooner were the tents pitched (it being about eleven o'clock), than they all stole home to Gondar in small

parties without their dinner, and presently a report was spread, that the King and Ras Michael came determined to burn the town, and put the inhabitants all to the sword. This occasioned the utmost consternation, and caused many to fly to Fasil.

As for me, the king's behaviour shewed me plainly all was not right, and an accident in the way confirmed it. He had desired me to ride before him, and shew him the horse I had got from Fasil, which was then in great beauty and order, and which I had kept purposely for him. It happened that, crossing the deep bed of a brook, a plant of the kantuffa hung across it. I had upon my shoulders a white goat-skin, of which it did not take hold; but the king, who was dressed in the habit of peace, his long hair floating all around his face, wrapt up in his mantle, or thin cotton cloak, so that nothing but his eyes could be seen, was paying more attention to the horse than to the branch of kantuffa beside him; it took first hold of his hair, and the fold of the cloak that covered his head, then spread itself over his whole shoulder in such a manner, that notwithstanding all the help that could be given him, and that I had, at first seeing it, cut the principal bough asunder with my knife, no remedy remained but he must throw off the upper garment, and appear in the under one, or waistcoat, with his head and face bare before all the spectators.

This is accounted great disgrace to a king, who always appears covered in public. However, he did not seem to be ruffled, nor was there any thing particular in his countenance more than before, but with great composure, and in rather a low voice, he called twice, Who is the Shum of this district? Unhappily he was not far off. A thin old man of sixty, and his son about thirty, came trotting, as their custom is, naked to their girdle, and stood before the king, who

was, by this time, quite cloathed again. What had struck the old man's fancy, I know not, but he passed my horse laughing, and seemingly wonderfully content with himself. I could not help considering him as a type of mankind in general, never more confident and careless than when on the brink of destruction. The king asked if he was Shum of that place? he answered in the affirmative, and added, which was not asked of him, that the other was his son.

There is always near the king, when he marches, an officer called Kanitz Kitzera, the executioner of the camp; he has upon the tore of his saddle a quantity of thongs made of bull hide, rolled up very artificially; this is called the tarade. The king made a sign with his head, and another with his hand, without speaking; and two loops of the tarade were instantly thrown round the Shum and his son's neck, and they were both hoisted upon the same tree, the tarade cut, and the end made fast to a branch. They were both left hanging, but I thought so awkwardly, that they would not die for some minutes, and might surely have been saved had any one dared to cut them down; but fear had fallen upon every person who had not attended the king to Tigre.

This cruel beginning seemed to me an omen that violent resolutions had been taken, the execution of which was immediately to follow; for though the king had certainly a delight in the shedding of human blood in the field, yet till that time I never saw him order an execution by the hands of the hangman; on the contrary, I have often seen him shudder and express disgust, lowly and in half words, at such executions ordered every day by Ras Michael. In this instance he seemed to have lost that feeling; and rode on, sometimes conversing about Fasil's horse, or other indifferent subjects, to those who were around him,

without once reflecting upon the horrid execution he had then so recently occasioned.

In the evening of the 23d, when encamped upon Mogetch, came Sanuda, the person who had made Socinios king, and who had been Ras under him; he was received with great marks of favour, in reward of the treacherous part he had acted. He brought with him prisoners, Guebra Denghel, the Ras's son in-law, one of the best and most amiable men in Abyssinia, but who had unfortunately embraced the wrong side of the question; and with him Sebaat Laab and Kefla Mariam, both men of great families in Tigre. These were, one after the other, thrown violently on their faces before the king. I was exceedingly distressed for Guebra Denghel; he prayed the king, with the greatest earnestness, to order him to be put to death before the door of his tent, and not delivered to his cruel father-in-law. To this the king made no answer, nor did he shew any signs of pity, but waved his hand, as a sign to carry them to Ras Michael, where they were put in custody and loaded with irons.

About two hours later came Ayto Aylo, son of Kasmati Eshte, whom the king had named governor of Begemder; he brought with him Chremation, brother to Socinios, and Abba Salama the Acab Saat, who had excommunicated his father, and been instrumental in his murder by Fasil. I had a great curiosity to see how they would treat the Acab Saat; for my head was full of what I had read in the European books, of exemption that churchmen had in this country from the jurisdiction of the civil power.

Aylo had made his legs to be tied under the mule's belly, his hands behind his back, and a rope made fast to them, which a man held in his hand on one side, while another led the halter of the mule on the

other, both of them with lances in their hands. Chremation had his hands bound, but his legs were not tied, nor was there any rope made fast to his hands by which he was held. While they were untying Abba Salama, I went into the presence chamber, and stood behind the king's chair. Very soon after Aylo's men brought in their prisoners, and, as is usual, threw them down violently with their faces to the ground; their hands being bound behind them, they had a very rude fall upon their faces.

The Acab Saat rose in a violent passion; he struggled to get loose his hands, that he might be free to use the act of denouncing excommunication, which is by lifting the right hand, and extending the fore-finger; finding that impossible, he cried out, "Unloose my hands, or you are all excommunicated." It was with difficulty he could be prevailed upon to hear the king, who with great composure, or rather indifference, said to him, "You are the first ecclesiastical officer in my household, you are the third in the whole kingdom; but I have not yet learned you ever had power to curse your sovereign, or exhort his subjects to murder him. You are to be tried for this crime by the judges to-morrow, so prepare to shew in your defence, upon what precepts of Christ, or his apostles, or upon what part of the general councils, you found your title to do this."

"Let my hands be unloosed," cried Salama violently; "I am a priest, a servant of God; and they have power, says David, to put kings in chains, and nobles in irons. And did not Samuel hew king Agag to pieces before the Lord? I excommunicate you, Tecla Haimanout." And he was going on, when Tecla Mariam, son of the king's secretary, a young man, struck the Acab Saat so violently on the face, that it made his mouth gush out with blood, saying, at the

same time, "What! suffer this in the king's presence?" Upon which both Chremation and the Acab Saat were hurried out of the tent without being suffered to say more; indeed the blow seemed to have so much disconcerted Abba Salama, that it deprived him for a time of the power of speaking.

In Abyssinia it is death to strike, or lift the hand to strike, before the king; but in this case the provocation was so great, so sudden, and unexpected, and the youth's worth and the insolence of the offender so apparent to every body, that a slight reproof was ordered to be given to Tecla Mariam (by his father only); but he lost no favour for what he had done, either with the King, Michael, or the people.

When the two prisoners were carried before the Ras, he refused to see them, but loaded them with irons, and committed them to close custody. That night a council was held in the king's tent, but it broke early up; afterwards another before the Ras, which sat much later; the reason was, that the first, where the king was, only arranged the business of tomorrow, whilst that before the Ras considered all that was to be done or likely to happen at any time.

On the 24th the drum beat, and the army was on their march by dawn of day; they halted a little after passing the rough ground, and then doubled their ranks, and formed into close order of battle, the king leading the centre; a few of his black horse were in two lines immediately before him, their spears pointed upwards, his officers and nobility on each side, and behind him the rest of the horse, distributed in the wings, excepting prince George and Ayto Confu, who, with two small bodies, not exceeding a hundred, scoured the country, sometimes in the front, and sometimes in the flank. I do not remember who commanded the rest of the army; my mind was other-

wise engaged; they marched close and in great order, and every one trembled for the fate of Gondar. We passed the Mahometan town, and encamped upon the river Kahha, in front of the market-place. As soon as we had turned our faces to the town, our kettle-drums were brought to the front, and, after beating some time, two proclamations were made. The first was, "That all those who had flour or barley in quantities, should bring it that very day to a fair market, on pain of having their houses plundered; and that all people, soldiers, or others, who attempted by force to take any provisions without having first paid for them in ready money, should be hanged upon the spot." A bench was quickly brought, and set under a tree in the middle of the market; a judge appointed to sit there; a strong guard, and several officers placed round him; behind him an executioner, and a large coil of ropes laid at his feet. The second proclamation was, "That everybody should remain at home in their houses, otherwise the person flying, or deserting the town, should be reputed a rebel, his goods confiscated, his house burnt, and his family chastised at the king's pleasure for seven years." So far all was well and politic.

There was at Gondar a sort of mummers, being a mixture of buffoons and ballad-singers, and posture-masters. These people, upon all public occasions, run about the streets; and on private ones, such as marriages, come to the court-yards before the houses, where they dance, and sing songs of their own composing in honour of the day, and perform all sorts of antics: many a time, on his return from the field with victory, they had met Ras Michael, and received his bounty for singing his praises, and welcoming him upon his return home. The day the Abuna excom-

municated the king, this set of vagrants made part of the solemnity; they abused, ridiculed, and traduced Michael in lampoons and scurrilous rhymes, calling him crooked, lame, old, and impotent, and several other opprobrious names, which did not affect him nearly so much as the ridicule of his person: upon many occasions after, they repeated this, and particularly in a song they ridiculed the horse of Sire, who had run away at the battle of Limjour, where Michael cried out, "Send these horse to the mill." It happened that these wretches, men and women, to the number of about thirty and upwards, were then, with very different songs, celebrating Ras Michael's return to Gondar. The King and Ras, after the proclamation, had just turned to the right to Aylo Meidan, below the palace, a large field where the troops exercise. Confu and the king's household troops were before, and about 200 of the Sire horse were behind; on a signal made by the Ras, these horse turned short and fell upon the singers, and cut them all to pieces. In less than two minutes they were all laid dead upon the field, excepting one young man, who, mortally wounded, had just strength enough to arrive within twenty yards of the king's horse, and there fell dead without speaking a word.

All the people present, most of them veteran soldiers, and consequently inured to blood, appeared shocked and disgusted at this wanton piece of cruelty. For my part, a kind of faintishness, or feebleness, had taken possession of my heart, ever since the execution of the two men on our march, about the kantuffa; and this second act of cruelty occasioned such a horror, joined with an absence of mind, that I found myself unable to give an immediate answer, though the king had spoken twice to me.

It was about nine o'clock in the morning when we

entered Gondar; every person we met on the street wore the countenance of a condemned malefactor; the Ras went immediately to the palace with the king, who retired, as usual, to a kind of cage or lattice-window*, where he always sits unseen when in council. We were then in the council-chamber, and four of the judges seated; none of the governors of provinces were present but Ras Michael, and Kasmati Tesfos of Sire. Abba Salama was brought to the foot of the table without irons, at perfect liberty. The accuser for the king (it is a post in this country in no great estimation) began the charge against him with great force and eloquence. He stated, one by one, the crimes committed by him at different periods; the sum of which amounted to prove Salama to be the greatest monster upon earth; among these were various kinds of murder, especially by poison; incest, with every degree collateral and descendant. He concluded this black, horrid list, with the charge of high treason, or cursing the king, and absolving his subjects from their allegiance, which he stated as the greatest crime human nature was capable of, as involving, in its consequences, all sorts of other crimes. Abba Salama, though he seemed under very great impatience, did not often interrupt him, further than 'You lie,' and, 'It is a lie,' which he repeated at every new charge. His accuser had not said one word of the murder of Joas, but passed it over without the smallest allusion to it.

In this, however, Abba Salama did not follow his example: Being desired to answer in his own defence, he entered upon it with great dignity, and an air of superiority, very different from his behaviour in

* Called the shekshek in the Abyssinian Annals.—E.

the king's tent the day before: he laughed and made extremely light of the charges on the article of women, which he neither confessed nor denied; but said these might be crimes among the Franks (looking at me), or other Christians, but not the Christians of that country, who lived under a double dispensation, the law of Moses and the law of Christ: he said the Abyssinians were *Beni Israel*, as indeed they call themselves, that is, children of Israel; and that, in every age, the patriarchs had acted as he did, and were not less beloved of God. He went roundly into the murder of Joas, and of his two brothers, Adigo and Aylo, on the mountain of Wechne, and charged Michael directly with it, as also with the poisoning the late Hatze Hannes, father of the present king.

The Ras seemed to avoid hearing, sometimes by speaking to people standing behind him, sometimes by reading a paper; in particular, he asked me, standing directly behind his chair, in a low voice, "What is the punishment in your country for such a crime?" It was his custom to speak to me in his own language of Tigre, and one of his greatest pastimes to laugh at my faulty expressions. He spoke this to me in Amharic, so I knew he wanted my answer should be understood: I therefore said, in the same low tone of voice he had spoke to me, "High treason is punished with death in all the countries I have ever known."—This I owed to Abba Salama, and it was not long before I had my return.

Abba Salama next went into the murder of Kasmati Eshte, which he confessed he was the promoter of. He said the Iteghe, with her brothers and Ayto Aylo, had all turned Franks, so had Gusho of Amhara; and that, in order to make the country Catholic, they had sent for priests, who lived with them in confidence, as that Frank did, pointing to me: that it

was against the law of the country that I should be suffered here; that I was accursed, and should be stoned as an enemy to the Virgin Mary. There the Ras interrupted him, by saying, "Confine yourself to your own defence; clear yourself first, and then accuse any one you please: it is the king's intention to put the law in execution against all offenders, and it is only as believing you the greatest, that he has begun with you."

This calmness of the Ras seemed to disconcert the Acab Saat; he lost all method; he warned the Ras, that it was owing to his excommunicating Kasmati Eshte that room was made for him to come to Gondar; without that event, this king would never have been upon the throne; so that he had still done them as much good by his excommunications as he had done them harm: He told the Ras, and the judges, that they were all doubly under a curse, if they offered either to pull out his eyes, or cut out his tongue; and prayed them, bursting into tears, not so much as to think of either, if it was only for old fellowship, or friendship, which had long subsisted between them.

There is an officer, named Kal Hatze, who stands always upon steps at the side of the lattice window, where there is a hole covered in the inside with a curtain of green taffeta; behind this curtain the king sits, and through this hole he sends what he has to say to the Board, who rise, and receive the messenger standing: He had not interfered till now, when the officer said, addressing himself to Abba Salama, "The king requires of you to answer directly, why you persuaded the Abuna to excommunicate him? The Abuna is a slave of the Turks, and has no king; you are born under a monarchy; why did you, who are his inferior in office, take upon you to advise him at all? or why, after having presumed to advise him, did you advise him wrong, and abuse his ignorance in

these matters?" This question, which was a home one, made him lose all his temper; he cursed the Abuna, called him Mahometan, Pagan, Frank, and Infidel; and was going on in this wild manner, when Tecla Haimanout*, the eldest of the judges, got up, and addressing himself to the Ras, "It is no part of my duty to hear all this railing; he has not so much as offered one fact material to his exculpation."

The king's secretary sent up to the window the substance of his defence, the criminal was carried at some distance to the other end of the room, and the judges deliberated whilst the king was reading. Very few words were said among the rest; the Ras was all the time speaking to other people: After he had ended this, he called upon the youngest judge to give his opinion; and he gave it, "He is guilty, and should die;" the same said all the officers, and after them the judges; and the same said Kasmati Tesfos after them. When it came to Ras Michael to give his vote, he affected moderation; he said, "That he was accused for being his enemy and accomplice; in either case, it is not fair that he should judge him†." No superior officer being present, the last voice remained with the king, who sent Kal Hatze to the Board with his sentence; "He is guilty, and *shall* die *the death*.—The hangman *shall* hang him upon a tree *to-day*." The unfortunate Acab Saat was immediately hurried away by the guards to the place of execution, which is a large tree before the king's gate; where uttering, to the very last moment, curses against the King, the Ras, and the Abuna, he suffered the death he very

* The same whose foot was hurt by Strates's mule in the campaign of Maitsha.

† These are the very same with the words spoken by Michael, when called upon to sit in judgment upon Mariam Barea. MS. Annals of Abyssinia, Vol. V.—E.

richly deserved, being hanged in the very vestments in which he used to sit before the king, without one ornament of his civil or sacerdotal pre-eminence having been taken from him before the execution. In going to the tree, he said he had 400 cows, which he bequeathed to some priests to say prayers for his soul; but the Ras ordered them to be brought to Gondar, and distributed among his soldiers.

I have entered into a longer detail of this trial, at the whole of which I assisted, the rather that I might ask this question of those that maintain the absolute independence of the Abyssinian priesthood, "Whether, if the many instances already mentioned have not had the effect, this one does not fully convince them, that all ecclesiastical persons are subject to the secular power in Abyssinia, as much as they are in Britain, or any European state whatever?"

Chremation, Socinios's brother, was next called; he seemed half dead with fear; he only denied having any concern in his brother being elected king. He said he had no post, and in this he spoke the truth, but confessed that he had been sent by Abba Salama to bring the Itchegue and the Abuna to meet him the day of excommunication at Dippabye. It was further unluckily proved against him, that he was present with his brother at plundering the houses in the night-time when the man was killed; and upon this he was sentenced to be immediately hanged. The court then broke up, and went to breakfast. All this had passed in less than two hours; it was not quite eleven o'clock when all was over; but Ras Michael had sworn he would not taste bread till Abba Salama was hanged; and on such occasions he never broke his word.

Immediately after this last execution, the kettle-drums beat at the palace-gate, and the crier made this proclamation, "That all lands and villages, which are

now, or have been given to the Abuna by the king, shall revert to the king's own use, and be subject to the government, or the Cantiba of Dembea, or such officers as the king shall afterwards appoint in the provinces where they are situated."

I went home, and my house being but a few yards from the palace, I passed the two unfortunate people hanging upon the same branch; and, full of the cruelty of the scene I had witnessed, which I knew was but a preamble to much more, I determined firmly, at all events, to quit this country.

The next morning came on the trial of the unfortunate Guebra Denghel, Sebaat Laab, and Kefla Mariam; the Ras claimed his right of trying these three at his own house, as they were all three subjects of his government of Tigre. Guebra Denghel bore his hard fortune with great unconcern, declaring, that his only reason of taking up arms against the king was, that he saw no other way of preventing Michael's tyranny and monstrous thirst of money and of power: that the Ras was really king, had subverted the constitution, annihilated all difference of rank and persons, and transferred the efficient parts of government into the hands of his own creatures. He wished the king might know this was his only motive for rebellion, and that, unless it had been to make this declaration, he would not have opened his mouth before so partial and unjust a judge as he considered Michael to be.

But Welleta Selasse, his daughter, hearing the danger her father was in, broke suddenly out of Ozoro Esther's apartment, which was contiguous; and, coming into the council-room at the instant her father was condemned to die, threw herself at the Ras's feet with every mark and expression of the most extreme sorrow. I cannot, indeed, repeat what her expressions were, as I was not present, and I thank God that I was

not; I believe they are ineffable by any mouth but her own; but they were perfectly unsuccessful. The old tyrant threatened her with immediate death, spurned her away with his foot, and in her hearing ordered her father to be immediately hanged. Welleta Selasse, in a fit, or faint, which resembled death, fell speechless to the ground. The father, forgetful of his own situation, flew to his daughter's assistance, and they were both dragged out at separate doors, the one to death, the other to after-sufferings, greater than death itself.

Fortune seemed to have taken delight, from very early life, constantly to traverse the greatness and happiness of this young lady. She was first destined to be married to Joas, and the affair was nearly concluded, when the fatal discovery, made at the battle of Azazo, that the king had sent his household troops privately to fight for Fasil against Michael, prevented her marriage, and occasioned his death. She was then destined to old Hatze Hannes, Tecla Haimanout's father: Michael, who found him incapable of being a king, judged him as incapable of being a husband to a woman of the youth and charms of Welleta Selasse, and therefore deprived him at once of his life, crown, and bride. She was now not seventeen, and it was designed she should be married to the present king; Providence put a stop to a union that was not agreeable to either party. She died some time after this, before the battle of Serbraxos; being strongly pressed to gratify the brutal inclinations of the Ras, her grandfather, whom when she could not resist or avoid, she took poison: others said it was given her by Ozoro Esther from jealousy; but this was certainly without foundation. I saw her in her last moments, but too late to give her any assistance; and she had told her women-servants and slaves, that she had taken ar-

senic, having no other way to avoid committing so monstrous a crime as incest with the murderer of her father.

The rage, that the intercession of the daughter for her father Guebra Denghel had put the Ras into, was seen in the severity of the sentence he passed upon the other two criminals; Kefla Mariam's eyes were pulled out, Sebaat Laab's eye-lids were cut off by the roots, and both of them were exposed in the market-place to the burning sun, without any covering whatever. Sebaat Laab died of a fever in a few days; Kefla Mariam lived, if not to see, at least to hear, that he was revenged, after the battle of Serbraxos, by the disgrace and captivity of Michael.

I will spare myself the disagreeable task of shocking my readers with any further account of these horrid cruelties; enough has been said to give an idea of the character of these times and people. Blood continued to be spilt as water, day after day, till the Epiphany; priests, lay-men, young men and old, noble and vile, daily found their end by the knife or the cord. Fifty-seven people died publicly by the hand of the executioner in the course of a very few days; many disappeared and were either murdered privately, or sent to prisons no one knew where.

The bodies of those killed by the sword were hewn to pieces and scattered about the streets, being denied burial. I was miserable, and almost driven to despair, at seeing my hunting dogs, twice let loose by the carelessness of my servants, bringing into the court-yard the head and arms of slaughtered men, and which I could no way prevent but by the destruction of the dogs themselves; the quantity of carrion, and the stench of it, brought down the hyænas in hundreds from the neighbouring mountains; and, as few people in Gondar go out after it is dark, they enjoyed the streets by themselves, and seemed ready to dispute

the possession of the city with the inhabitants. Often when I went home late from the palace, and it was this time the king chose chiefly for conversation, though I had but to pass the corner of the market-place before the palace, had lanthorns with me, and was surrounded with armed men, I heard them grunting by two's and three's so near me as to be afraid they would take some opportunity of seizing me by the leg; a pistol would have frightened them, and made them speedily run, and I constantly carried two loaded at my girdle; but the discharging a pistol in the night would have alarmed every one that heard it in the town, and it was not now the time to add any thing to people's fears. I at last scarce ever went out, and nothing occupied my thoughts but how to escape from this bloody country by the way of Sennaar, and how I could best exert my power and influence over Yasine at Ras el Feel to pave my way, by assisting me to pass the desert into Atbara.

The king missing me some days at the palace, and hearing I had not been at Ras Michael's, began to inquire who had been with me. Ayto Confu soon found Yasine, who informed him of the whole matter; upon this I was sent for to the palace, where I found the king, without anybody but menial servants. He immediately remarked that I looked very ill; which, indeed, I felt to be the case, as I had scarcely ate or slept since I saw him last, or even for some days before. He asked me, in a condoling tone, "What ailed me? that, besides looking sick, I seemed as if something had ruffled me, and put me out of humour." I told him that what he observed was true: that, coming across the market-place, I had seen Za Mariam, the Ras's door-keeper, with three men bound, one of whom he fell a-hacking to pieces in my presence. Upon seeing me running across the place, stopping my

nose, he called me to stay till he should come and dispatch the other two, for he wanted to speak to me, as if he had been engaged about ordinary business: that the soldiers, in consideration of his haste, immediately fell upon the other two, whose cries were still remaining in my ears; that the hyænas at night would scarcely let me pass in the streets when I returned from the palace; and the dogs fled into my house to eat pieces of human carcases at leisure.

Although his intention was to look grave, I saw it was all he could do to stifle a laugh at grievances he thought very little of. "The men you saw with Za Mariam just now," says he, "are rebels, sent by Kefla Yasous for examples: he has forced a junction with Tecla and Welleta Michael in Samen, and a road is now open through Woggora, and plenty established in Gondar. The men you saw suffer were those that cut off the provisions from coming into the city; they have occasioned the death of many poor people; as for the hyæna, he never meddles with living people, he seeks carrion, and will soon clear the streets of those incumbrances that so much offend you; people say that they are the Falasha of the mountains, who take that shape of the hyæna, and come down into the town to eat Christian flesh in the night." "If they depend upon Christian flesh, and eat no other," said I, "perhaps the hyænas of Gondar will be the worst fed of any in the world." "True," says he, bursting out into a loud laughter, "that may be; few of those that die by the knife anywhere are Christians, or have any religion at all; why then should you mind what they suffer?" "Sir," said I, "that is not my sentiment; if you was to order a dog to be tortured to death before me every morning, I could not bear it. The carcases of Abba Salama, Guebra Denghel, and the rest, are still hanging where they were

upon the tree; you smell the stench of them at the palace-gate, and will soon, I apprehend, in the palace itself. This cannot be pleasant, and I do assure you it must be very pernicious to your health, if there was nothing else in it. At the battle of Fagitta, though you had no intention to retreat, yet you went half a day backward, to higher ground, and purer air, to avoid the stench of the field; but here in the city you heap up carrion about your houses, where is your continual residence.''

"The Ras has given orders," says he, gravely, "to remove all the dead bodies before the Epiphany, when we go down to keep that festival, and wash away all this pollution in the clear-running water of the Kahha: but, tell me, Yagoube, is it really possible that you can take such things as these so much to heart? You are a brave man; we all know you are, and have seen it: we have all blamed you, stranger as you are in this country, for the little care you take of yourself; and yet about these things you are as much affected as the most cowardly woman, girl, or child could be." "Sir," said I, "I do not know if I am brave or not; but if to see men tortured, or murdered, or to live among dead bodies without concern, be courage, I have it not, nor desire to have it: war is the profession of noble minds; it is a glorious one; it is the science and occupation of kings, and many wise and many humane men have dedicated their whole life to the study of it in every country; it softens men's manners, by obliging them to society, to assist, befriend, and even save one another, though at their own risk and danger. A barbarian of that profession should be pointed at. Observe Ayto Engedan (who came at that very instant into the room); there is a young man," said I, "who, with the bravery, has al-

so the humanity and gentleness of my countrymen that are soldiers."

Engedan fell on his face before the king, as is usual, while the king went on seriously—"War you want; do you, Yagoube? war you shall have; it is not far distant, and Engedan is come to tell us how near." They then went into a considerable conversation about Gusho, Powussen, and the preparations they were making, and where they were; with which I shall not trouble the reader, as I shall have an occasion to speak of the particulars afterwards as they arise. "I want Confu," says the king; "I want him to send his men of Ras el Feel to Sennaar, and to the Baharnagash, to get horses and some coats of mail. And what do you think of sending Yagoube there? he knows their manners and their language, and has friends there to whom he is intending to escape, without so much as asking my leave." "Pardon me, sir," said I; "if I have ever entertained that thought, it is proof sufficient of the extreme necessity I am under to go." "Sir," says Engedan, "I have rode in the Koccob horse; I will do so again, if Yagoube commands them, and will stay with us till we try the horse of Begemder. I have eight or ten coats of mail, which I will give your majesty: they belonged to my father Eshte, and I took them lately from that thief Abou Barea, with whom they were left at my father's death; but I will tell your majesty, I had rather fight naked, without a coat of mail, than that you should send Yagoube to Sennaar, to purchase them from thence, for he will never return."

Ras Michael was now announced, and we made haste to get away. "I would have Confu, Engedan, and you, come here to-morrow night," says the king, "as soon as it is dark; and do not you, Yagoube, for your life, speak one word of Sennaar, till you

know my will upon it." He said this in the sternest manner, and with all the dignity and majesty of a king.

We passed the Ras in the anti-chamber, attended by a great many people. We endeavoured to slide by him in the crowd, but he noticed us, and brought us before him. We both kissed his hands, and he kept hold of one of mine, while he asked Engedan, "Is Fasil at Ibaba?" to which he was answered, "Yes." "Who is with him?" says the Ras. "Damot, Agow, and Maitsha," answered Engedan. "Was you there?" says the Ras. "No," answered Engedan; "I am at Tshemera, with few men." He then turned to me, and said, "My son is ill; Ozoro Esther has just sent to me, and complains you visit her now no more. Go see the boy, and don't neglect Ozoro Esther; she is one of your best friends." I inquired if she was at Gondar, and was answered, "No; she is at Koscam." We parted; Engedan went to Koscam to Ozoro Esther's, and I went home to plan my route to Sennaar, and to prepare letters for Hagi Belal, a merchant there, to whom I was recommended from Arabia Felix*.

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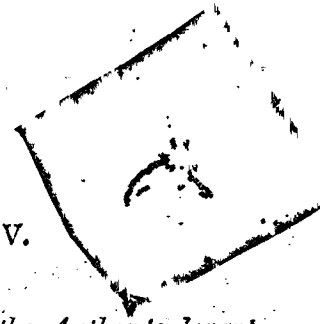
* The preceding chapter delineates very strongly the character of the Abyssinians, and perhaps of all the African nations during war. The conduct of the young king is one of the many proofs, which establish the truth of the sovereign power of custom and education over every heart. The history of Welleta Selassé is a finished picture of barbarous society, in which the strongest mind always commits the most daring excesses, and the gentlest virtues meet with greatest oppression.—E.



CHAP. IV.

The King promises Leave to the Author to depart—Receives a Reinforcement from Shoa—Amiable Carriage of Amha Yasous—Striking contrast between him and a Prince of the Galla—Bad State of the King's Affairs.

It was the 31st of December that we were at Koscam. A proclamation had been made some days before, of a general pardon to all that would return to Gondar; but no one had ventured but Ayto Engedan, who was with Fasil as the king's friend; nor were any of those who went with Fasil the object of the proclamation, for it was not thought that the retiring from Socinios with Fasil was doing any thing against their allegiance.

That night the bodies of Guebra Denghel, Kefla Mariam and Sebaat Laab, were taken down from the tree, and laid upon the ground; after having been watched in the night by their friends, to keep the beasts from them, they were at last suffered to be taken privately away, at the intercession of the troops of Tigre, whose countrymen they were. Chremation and Abba Salama were abandoned to their fortune, and in part putrefied; they were covered with heaps

of stones, thrown upon them by such as were passing, and had no other burial.

The next night, the 1st of January 1771, according to order, I waited upon the king with Confu and Engedan, and with them Yasine: measures were then taken for buying their horses and coats of mail; the Ras had advanced part of the money, the rest was to be made up by the meery, or king's duty, due by the Mahometan provinces, which had not been paid since he went to the Tigre. A Mahometan servant of the king was sent for from the customhouse; with him was to go a man from Yasine, and with them I sent my letters by the hand of Soliman, a black of Ras el Feel, a man remarkable for his strength, courage and size, and very shrewd and discerning, under the appearance of an ideot: Yasine was sent with them to get a safe conduct from his friend Fidele, Shekh of Atbara, who was to convoy them to Beyla, and thence to Sennaar.'

It was not without great dispute and altercation the king would allow me the permission to send letters; at last, seeing he could do no better, it was agreed that, as an immediate engagement between Powussen, Gusho, and Ras Michael, was inevitable, I should swear not to attempt to leave him till that affair was settled some way or other; but the king insisted I should also take an oath, that, should he be victorious over or reconciled to the rebels, if the engagement I was under in my own country was not fulfilled, and I recovered my health, I should bring as many of my brethren and family as possible, with their horses, muskets, and bayonets; that, if I could not pass by Sennaar, I should come by the way of the East Indies from Surat to Masuah, which, by how much it was more tedious, was by so much more secure than that by Sennaar.

I cannot but hope, the impossibility of performing this oath extinguished the sin of breaking it; at any rate, it was personal, and the subsequent death of the king * must have freed me from it: be that as it will, it had this good effect, that it greatly composed my mind for the time, as I now no longer considered my self as involved in that ancient and general rule of the country. Never to allow a stranger to return to his home. We that night learned, that the king had been in great straits ever since he came from Tigre; that the Ras, who was possessed of all the revenues of the provinces that were in their allegiance, had never yet given the king an ounce of gold; and that he furnished his daily subsistence from his own house, a cow for his own and great officer's table, and two loaves of bread for each of his servants; as small an allowance as any private person gave. It was believed that the Ras had left most of his money in Tigre, and had trusted to the contributions he was to levy upon the great men whenever he should cross the Tacazze; but in this he disappointed himself by his cruelty, for no person came before him, on his arrival at Gondar, from whom he could raise a farthing.

It was about the 20th of January, that a message arrived from Powussen, to tell the Ras that he had taken the usurper Socinios prisoner, and held him in irons at the king's disposal. He upbraided Michael with the cruelties of his executions, and declared his resolution of calling him to an account for these personally at Gondar; he warned him in time, to

* It was reported, when I was at Sennaar, that the king had been defeated and slain. I have no other authority; only think, all things considered, it was most probable.

repass the Tacazze, and retire while it was in his power, to his government of Tigre, where nobody would molest him, and leave the king at liberty to act for himself. Gusho likewise sent a messenger; but what word he brought did not transpire. After seeing the king and Ras Michael, both these messengers proceeded to Fasil. Soon after this came a message from Fasil, desiring only that the king and the Ras might renew to him the grant of his father's lands and estates, which he formerly possessed: what was the meaning of this message I could never learn; he was already in full possession of what he asked and more; no person had attempted to take any thing from him, nor was it indeed in their power.

Proclamation was made accordingly in terms of the request, and all the lands that he had possessed were given him: before he could have news of this first grant, a second messenger came, desiring that he might be confirmed in his government of Maitsha, Damot, and Agow. This too was immediately granted him; but a condition was added, that he should bring the troops of these provinces, and as many others as he could raise, to join the king with all possible speed, and take the field with Ras Michael against Powussen and Gusho; and this was but what he had spontaneously promised when he made his peace at Dingleber. At the same time Ayto Aylo, brother to Engedan, was proclaimed governor of Begemder; and all people holding of the king or of Aylo's friends (for he had a large estate in that province), were ordered to join him; but a very few came, among whom was the famous Guigarr, chief of the clan, Waag of Lasta, son to Aylo's sister.

Meantime the king used all the means in his power to induce the Iteghe to return to Koscam; for her presence in Gojam kept alive the spirit of a number

of people that were atttached to her, who bore very impatiently to see her banished, as she then was, though resident with her daughter Ozoro Welleta Israel, and surrounded by the forces of [illegible] her grandson, who was governor of Gojam, and to whom half of that province belonged in property. But the queen was resolute never to trust Ras Michael, though it was believed she sent the king a sum in gold privately by Engedan.

It was in the end of January that another message arrived from Fasil, excusing his coming to Gondar on account of the badness of his health; he said, besides, he could not trust Michael, unless he gave him Welleta Selasse, his grand daughter, to wife, and sent her to him to Bure. I have already mentioned that the Ras was fond of this young lady himself, and nothing but that hindered him from giving her to the king in marriage; and it was said, and I believe with truth, that some delicacy * the king had expressed about this since his return from Tigre, was the reason of coldness between him and the Ras, and of Michael's putting the king on so short allowance on his first coming to Gondar: but that all that was now removed by the necessities of the times; gold came from Tigre in plenty; even Powussen had sent some of the revenue of Begemder, all the other provinces, a proportion, with butter, cattle, and cotton cloths, for the maintenance of the king's household and troops: for my part, though I enjoyed the name of several posts, I had partaken since this last revolution of a very small part of their revenues; I had been liberally supplied in the king's absence by Ozoro Esther and the queen. I had few servants, and lived cheaply in the

* Suspicion of familiarity with the Ras, her grandfather.

Iteghe's place at Koscam; but after my arrival, the king on purpose, I believe, to disconcert my journey, ran me grievously into debt with the soldiers, and other expences that were, as I was told, absolutely necessary; it is true these were paid in part at times, but very irregularly. Ras Michael was not a man to be craved, nor was my temper such as could be brought to crave him; from this it arose, that often I had been in great straits, and obliged to live sparingly, which luckily was never a great hardship upon me in order to fulfil my promise to others. And now the campaign was beginning, horses, and mules, and every thing necessary were to be purchased, and I was in debt above one hundred pounds, nor would it have been possible I ever should have cleared myself, for my daily expences were enormous, if it had not been for the situation that a certain Greek, named Petros, was in, from whom I borrowed about three hundred pounds, as I shall after mention. With regard to Kasmati Fasil, he sent me, twice, two large jars of honey from my lordship of Geesh, at two different times: the first was taken by Coque Abou Barea, the last tasted so bitter of lupines, that no use could be made of it. I was a sovereign, it is true, and my revenue was what wise men have said is the best,—the love of the people. It went, however, but little way towards supporting my dignity.

While the king was at the Kahha, keeping the festival of the Epiphany, he received a very extraordinary visit from Amha Yasous, son of the governor of Shoa, offering his personal service, and assistance to the king, and brought with him as a present, 500 ounces of gold, and a thousand excellent horsemen, ready equipt at all points. Upon his being presented to the king, two young noblemen were instructed to

lay hold of him by the arms, and prevent his throwing himself upon the ground, if he intended so to do. The king was seated upon the throne, very richly dressed in brocade, a very fine muslin web wrapt loosely about him, so as to hang in plaits, and in some parts show, and in some conceal, the flowers of the cloth of gold of which his waistcoat was composed. His hair was loose, combed out at its full length, and falling about his head in every direction, and a fork, like a skewer, made of a rhinoceros horn, with a gold button or head upon it, stuck through his hair near his temples; he was all perfumed with rose water, and two people stood on the opposite sides of the tent, each of them with a silver bottle full of it.

Amha Yasous, with his thousand horse, presented himself before the door of the tent, and rode on till he was completely in it; he then descended, as in a great hurry or surprise, and ran forward, stooping, to the foot of the throne, inclining his body lower and lower as he approached; and, just before the act of prostration, he was seized by Tecla Mariam and Guebra Menfus Kedus, and prevented from kissing the ground; the king held his hand uncovered, but not extended, that is, as if he did not intend or expect that he should kiss it. Amha Yasous, after the struggle was over about the prostration, suddenly seized the king's hand and kissed it, with some resistance on the part of the king, who, when he had kissed the back of his hand, turned the palm likewise; a great mark of familiarity and confidence in this country. There was a small stool, about half a foot from the ground, covered with a Persian carpet. Amha Yasous attempted to speak standing, but was not suffered, but constrained by the two noblemen to sit down on the little stool; they then deluged him so with rose-water, that I do

believe he never in his life was so wet with rain. After some general questions the tent was cleared. All this ceremonial was premeditated and studied; the etiquette could not have been more punctually and uniformly observed in any court of Europe, and would have just signified what it did here.

Amha Yasous was a man from twenty-six to twenty-eight years of age, tall, and of a just degree of corpulence, with arms and legs finely made; he had a very beautiful face, small features, and the most affable manners. I have thought, when I have seen them together, that the king, Engedan, and himself, were three of the handsomest men I had ever beheld in any country; besides this, all three had fine understandings, noble sentiments, and courage superior to the greatest danger; charitable, too, and humane inclinations, were it not for that accursed indifference, or rather propensity, one of them had to shed human blood; this the young king had imbibed in the school of Michael, but for natural talents he certainly was the first of the three.

Apartments in the palace, and a table, were assigned to Amha Yasous, and he was served by the king's servants as well as his own; a guard was appointed at his door, the officer of which attended to receive his orders, and take the word, daily. This was the manner of receiving illustrious strangers in my time at Gondar. Anthule, a Greek, master of the king's wardrobe, was ordered from time to time to bring him clothes of the same kind with those the king wore. All the Ozoros, or noble women at court, fell violently in love with Amha Yasous, as fame reported, except Ozoro Esther. The young prince had not a grain of coldness nor indifference in his nature; he carried himself, wherever he went, with honourable, attentive, and decent gallantry. But his chief

attention was paid to Welleta Selasse; nor was Ras Michael jealous, nor, as public report went, was Welleta Selasse unkind. I was often in the evening in his parties at her house; a fixed, never-changing melancholy hung upon her face; deep and involuntary sighs escaped from her under visible constraint: it did not appear to me possible this could have been her behaviour, if in actual enjoyment of successful love; or that, after having gratified it, she could have put in execution that desperate resolution which apparently she had then formed in her mind.

Amha Yasous was son of a sister of Gusho; it was said afterwards that he had a commission from his father, governor of Shoa, to detach Gusho, if possible, from his alliance with Powussen, and bring him back to his allegiance to the king. Whether this was true or not I cannot say; but that this, or something similar, was the case, seemed to be more than probable from the behaviour of Gusho afterwards, during the whole campaign. Amha Yasous did not come to take part in the war; he only brought, in imitation of old times, a tribute to the king, as a testimony of the loyalty of the faithful province of Shoa; but he was so interested for the king, after being admitted into intimacy with him, and so pleased with the society of the young noblemen at court, that he determined to come back with the command of the troops of his father, and in his way force Gusho to return to his duty, if he was not already determined.

He had heard, while at Shoa, from some priests of Debra Libanos, that there was a strange white man in favour with the king at Gondar, who could do every thing but raise the dead; it was among his first requests to the king, to make him acquainted with me. The king therefore ordered me to wait upon him every morning, and I, on my part, did not let slip that op-

portunity. Insensibly we came to be inseparable companions. Our conversation fell one day to be upon the Abyssinian kings, who first lived in Shoa, at the time when the kingdom of Adel was a great mart for the East India trade, before the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope. He said that a book containing their history, he believed, was in some of the churches in Shoa, and that he would immediately send for it. Although I could not help testifying my desire of having a book which I had sought for in vain through the rest of the provinces of Abyssinia, yet I thought it unreasonable to desire a man to send 300 miles merely for the purpose of getting it; I therefore did not press it, being satisfied with his promise; but as my work would have been incomplete without it, I asked my friend Tecla Mariam to mention it to him as from the king. His answer was, "I have already promised to get it for Yagoube; the messenger by this time is in Amhara; depend upon it, my father will not fail to let me have it; for fear of mistake, I have dispatched a very intelligent man, who knows and has seen the book at Debra Libanos." The promise was punctually kept, the book came, and from it I have drawn the history of the Adelan war, and the reign of those kings who had not yet returned to Axum, but reigned in Shoa*.

One evening I inquired of him concerning the story which the Portuguese heard, at the discovery of Benin, that the blacks of that country had intercourse with a Christian inland state they acknowledged as sovereign, from which they procured the investiture of their lands, as has been already mentioned in the beginning of this work? whether any such commerce did exist with Shoa at present, or if traces remained of it in older times? if there was any other Christian or

* Part of Vol. II. Annals of Abyssinia.—E.

Jewish state in his neighbourhood to which this description could apply *? He said they knew nothing of Benin at Shoa, nor had he ever heard of the name, nor any custom of the kind that I had mentioned, which either then did or ever had prevailed in Shoa: he knew of no Christian state farther to the southward, excepting Narea, a great part of which was conquered by the Galla, who were Pagans. The blacks that were next to Shoa, he said, were exceedingly fierce, warlike, and cruel; worse than the Galla, and of the same kind with the Shangalla in Abyssinia. The other nations were partly Mahometan, but chiefly Galla, and some of these had turned Mahometan; but that they had no knowledge of any commerce with the Western, or Atlantic Ocean, though they knew the Eastern or Indian Ocean, which was nearer; were often served with Indian goods from Mahometan merchants from thence; but that the Galla had over-run most of the intermediate countries, and made the ways dangerous.

After Amha Yasous's audience with the king, he waited on Ras Michael also, to whom he brought a present in gold: politely excusing himself for having brought it in that form, on account that any other would have been troublesome, from the length of the way. He well knew, however, that an apology was needless, and that Ras Michael never saw any present in a more agreeable form than that of gold. I was not at the audience, nor do I know what passed at it; only that, on his introduction, the Ras was held up on his feet, and received him standing; they then both sat down upon the same seat, after which they dined heartily together at Ozoro Esther's apartment, who came from Koscam on purpose to pre-

* Conquetes des Portugais, liv. 1. p. 46. Lafitau.

pare their entertainment, and they drank and conversed together till late at night.

The sight of gold, and a thousand horse at the juncture, made Ras Michael as light and cheerful as a young man of twenty-five. No words concerning the government of Shoa passed, nor any proclamation relative to the state of that province; and this silence was equal to declaring it independent, as it was intended, and indeed it had been considered as such a long time before. As I saw Amha Yasous eat raw beef like the Abyssinians, I asked him if it was the custom of other nations to the southward? He said he believed so, if they were not Mahometans; and inquired of me if it was not likewise the practice among us. I imagine it prevails as far as the Cape of Good Hope.

Another interview, which happened at the Kahha, was much more extraordinary in itself though of much less importance to the state. Guangoul, chief of the Galla of Angot, that is, of the eastern Galla, came to pay his respects to the king and Ras Michael; he had with him about 500 foot and 40 horse; he brought with him a number of large horns for carrying the king's wine, and some other such trifles. He was a little, thin, cross-made man, of no apparent strength or swiftness, as far as could be conjectured; his legs and thighs being thin and small for his body, and his head large; he was of a yellow, unwholesome colour, not black nor brown; he had long hair plaited and interwoven with the bowels of oxen, and so knotted and twisted together as to render it impossible to distinguish the hair from the bowels, which hung down in long strings, part before his breast and part behind his shoulder, the most extraordinary ringlets I had ever seen. He had likewise a wreath of guts hung about his neck, and several rounds of the same about his middle, which served as a girdle, below which was a short cotton cloth dipt in

butter, and all his body was wet, and running down with the same; he seemed to be about fifty years of age, with a confident and insolent superiority painted in his face. In his country, it seems, when he appears in state, the beast he rides upon is a cow*. He was then in full dress and ceremony, and mounted upon one, not of the largest sort, but which had monstrous horns. He had no saddle on his cow. He had short drawers, that did not reach the middle of his thighs; his knees, feet, legs, and all his body were bare. He had a shield of a single hide, warped by the heat in several directions, and much in the shape of a high-crowned, large, straw-hat, with which the fashionable women in our own country sometimes disguise themselves. He carried a short lance in his right hand, with an ill-made iron head, and a shaft that seemed to be of thorn-tree, but altogether without ornament, which is seldom the case with the arms of barbarians. Whether it was necessary for the poizing himself upon the sharp ridge of the beast's back, or whether it was meant as graceful riding, I do not know, being quite unskilled in cowmanship; but he leaned exceedingly backwards, pushing his belly forwards, and holding his left arm and shield stretched out on one side of him, and his right arm and lance in the same way on the other, like wings.

The king was seated on his ivory chair, to receive him, almost in the middle of his tent; the day was very hot, and an insufferable stench of carrion soon made every one in the tent sensible of the approach of this nasty sovereign, even before they saw him. The king, when he perceived him coming, was so struck with the whole figure and appearance, that he could not contain himself from an immoderate fit of

* The Galla worship, or at least have a superstitious veneration for some kinds of that animal. Vide MS. Life of Za Denghel.—E.

laughter, which finding it impossible to stifle, he rose from his chair, and ran as hard as he could into another apartment behind the throne.

The savage got off from his cow at the door of the tent with all his tripes about him; and, while we were admiring him as a monster, seeing the king's seat empty, he took it for his own, and down he sat upon the crimson silk cushion, with the butter running from every part of him. A general cry of astonishment was made by every person in the tent: he started up I believe without divining the cause, and before he had time to recollect himself, they fell all upon him, and with pushes and blows drove this greasy chieftain to the door of the tent, staring with wild amazement, not knowing what was next to happen. It is high treason, and punishable by immediate death, to sit down upon the king's chair. Poor Guangoul owed his life to his ignorance. The king had beheld the scene through the curtain; if he laughed heartily at the beginning, he laughed ten times more at the catastrophe; he came out laughing, and unable to speak. The cushion was lifted and thrown away, and a yellow Indian shawl spread on the ivory stool; and ever after, when it was placed, and the king not there, the stool was turned on its face upon the carpet to prevent such like accidents.

Guangoul, disappointed of having an audience of the King, went to the Ras, where he was better received, but what passed I know not. His troops, armed like himself, with shields of no resistance, and hedge-stakes burnt and sharpened at the end instead of lances, were no acquistion to any party, especially in the present quarrel, where all the veteran troops in Abyssinia were nearly equally divided on opposite sides; besides, the Shoa horse had taken the eyes of people so much, that they began to think little

of any cavalry that was not in some degree equipped like them.

After the king returned to the palace, great diversion was made at Guangoul's appearance, in so much that Ozoro Esther, who hated the very name of Galla, and of this race in particular, insisted upon seeing a representation of it. Doho, accordingly, a dwarf belonging to Ras Michael, very ugly, with a monstrous big head, but very sharp and clever, and capable of acting his part, was brought to represent the person of Guangoul: a burnt stick and a bad shield were provided; but the great difficulty remained, how to persuade Doho, the dwarf, to put on the raw guts about his neck and waist, and, above all, to plait them in the hair, which he absolutely refused, both from religious and cleanly motives; as for the butter, it was no objection, as all the Abyssinians anoint themselves with it daily, after bathing. Here we were very near at a stand, all the ladies having in vain supplicated him to suffer for their sakes a temporary pollution, with promises that oceans of rose and scented water should be poured upon him afterwards, to restore his former sweetness. Doho was a man who constantly spent his time in reading scripture, the acts of the councils, the works of St John Chrysostom, and other such books as they have among them. He remained inflexible: at last I suggested that several hanks of cotton, dyed blue, red, and yellow, should be got from the weavers in the Mahometan town; and these, oiled, greased, and knotted properly, and twisted among the hair, well-anointed with butter, would give a pretty accurate resemblance of what we saw in the king's tent. All hands were immediately set to work; the cotton was provided; Ozoro Esther's servants and slaves decked Doho to the life. I spotted his face with stibium, and others anointed him with butter; an old milk-cow

was found, contrary to my expectation, that suffered a rider without much impatience, and in came Guangoul into a great hall in Ozoro Esther's apartment.

Never was any thing better personated, or better received; the whole hall resounded with one cry of laughter; Doho encouraged by this, and the perfect indifference and steadiness of his cow, began to act his part with great humour and confidence: he was born in the neighbourhood of these very Galla, knew their manners, and spoke their language perfectly. Amha Yasous, Confu, Aylo, brother to Engedan, with some servants of the king, acted the part that we did in the tent the day of the audience, that is, stood on each side of the king's chair: the cow was brought into the middle of the room, and Guangoul descended with his lance and shield in great state; a cushion was not spared, nor did Doho spare the cushion; the butter shewed very distinctly where he had been sitting: we all fell upon him and belaboured him heartily, and chaced him to the door. His speedy retreat was not counterfeited. Ozoro Altash, Esther's sister, and a number of the ladies were present. Ozoro Esther declared she would send for the Ras, he having been in great good humour since the arrival of Amha Yasous. I had not seen him since the recovery of his son, and happened to be at the door next him; he took me by the hand and said, "Welleta Hawaryat (that was the name of his son) is well, you are very kind."

Michael was esteemed the best orator in his country, and spoke his own language, Tigréan, with the utmost purity and elegance; yet in common conversation he was very sententious, two or three words at a time, but never obscure; this he had contracted by a long practice of commanding armies, where he saw as instantly and clearly, as he spoke shortly and distinctly.

He bowed very civilly to the ladies, and pointed to me to sit down on the seat by him. Amha Yasous was standing before him; I hastened to sit down on the carpet at his feet, and he seemed to recollect himself, and placed Amha Yasous beside him: it was easy to perceive by his look, that he gave me credit for my behaviour. When they were all seated, "Well," saye he, in great good humour, "what now, what is the matter? what can I do for you, Yagoube? are the women in your country as idle and foolish as these? has Ozoro Esther chosen a wife for you? she shall give you your dinner: I will give her a portion; and, as you are a horseman, the king, with Amha Yasous's leave," said he, bowing, "shall give you the command of the Shoa horse; I have seen them; the men, I think, are almost as white as yourself." Amha Yasous bowed in return, and said, "Sir, if the king bestows them so worthily, I promise to bring another thousand, as good as these, to join them after the rains, before next Epiphany."—"And I," says Ozoro Esther, "for my part, I have long had a wife for him. But this is not the present business; we know your time is precious; Guangoul is without, and desires an audience of you."—"Poh!" says the Ras, "Guangoul is gone to Gusho, at Minziro, and there is like to be a pretty story: here are accounts from Tigre, that he has committed great barbarities in his journey, laid waste some villages, killed the people, for not furnishing him with provisions: here in Belessen he also burnt a church and a village belonging to the Iteghe, and killed many poor people; I do not know what he means; I hope they will keep him where he is, and not send him home again through Tigre."

A communication of this kind, very uncommon from the Ras, occasioned a serious appearance in the

whole company; but he had no sooner done with speaking, then in comes Doho upon his cow; neither man nor woman that had yet seen him ever laughed so heartily as the old Ras; he humoured the thing entirely; welcomed Doho in Galla language, and saw the whole farce, finished by his flight to the door, with the utmost good humour. Then taking Amha Yasous with him, and several great officers who had come in the interim, he returned by a private passage to his own apartments.

As I shall have no occasion for further mention of this chieftain, I will here finish his story, though not in the order of time. Gusho and Powussen had gained Guangoul, and persuaded him to make an irruption with his Galla into the province of Tigre, to create a diversion against Michael, and, for that purpose, they had sent him home nearly the way he had come through that province. From this encouragement he had begun to conduct himself still worse than formerly. Ras Michael, suspecting what would happen, privately dispatched Ayto Confu after him with 600 horse. That young soldier, happy in a command that highly gratified his mother, and guided by the cries of the people, followed with the utmost diligence, and came up with him in the neighbourhood of Lasta, and there, after little resistance, Guangoul and his troops were cut to pieces, those that had escaped being all slain by the exasperated peasants. Confu returned to Gondar the night of the fifth day, together with the bloody trophies of his conquest over Guangoul and his Galla.

I have before mentioned that this chief had brought with him a quantity of large horns for the king's service. Some of this sort having been seen in India filled with civet, have given occasion to those travellers who saw them there to say, that the animal pro-

ducing these large horns was a carnivorous bull of a prodigious size, inhabiting the interior parts of Africa. That no illustration of this kind may be wanting, a copperplate of this curious bull is, I think, in some of the first volumes of the Philosophical Transactions. The origin of the tale is believed to be in Bernier or Thevenot. It may, however, with great certainty, be relied upon, that no such animal exists in Africa, nor probably in the whole creation. The animal furnishing those monstrous horns is a cow or bull, which would be reckoned of a middling size in England; its head and neck are larger and thicker in proportion, but not very remarkably so. I have been told this animal was first brought by the Galla from near the Line, where it rains continually, and the sun is little seen. This extraordinary size of its horns proceeds from a disease that the cattle have in those countries, of which they die, and is probably derived from their pasture and climate.

Whenever the animal shews symptoms of this disorder, he is set apart in the very best and quietest grazing place, and never driven or molested from that moment. His value lies then in his horns, for his body becomes emaciated and lank in proportion as the horns grow large. At the last period of his life the weight of his head is so great, that he is unable to lift it up, or at least for any space of time. The joints of his neck, become callous at last, so that it is not any longer in his power to lift his head. In this situation he dies, with scarcely flesh covering his bones, and it is then the horns are of the greatest size and value. I have seen horns that would contain as much as a common-sized iron-hooped water-pail, such as they make use of in the houses in England; but the Galla, who have a ready market for these of all sizes, generally kill the beast when his horns will contain something less

than six gallons. Two of these horns, filled with wine or spirits, are carried very commodiously upon a woman's back, flung over her shoulders. I had two of the largest size stole from me that night Socinios, Confu, and Chremation plundered my house, nor could I ever recover them. I have seen them at Gondar sold for four ounces of gold, equal to ten pounds sterling, the pair.

On the 17th * of February came messengers from Fasil, with the old language of proposals of submission and peace, and a repetition of his demand, that Welletta Selasse should be given him for a wife, and sent to him, at least as far as Dingleber, where he would advance to meet her; excusing himself from coming to Gondar, because the Ras had already broken his promise to him; for the condition of peace made with the Ras, when he was besieging the mountain, was, That if Michael should bring the king to the Tacazze, and surrender him there, and then return and content himself with the government of Tigre, without proceeding to Gondar, that Fasil should receive the king and conduct him to the capital, and be created Ras and governor in place of Michael. Fasil had punctually performed his part, and of this Michael had taken advantage, and had violated every article which he had stipulated on the other side; and this was at least the alleged reason why Fasil had refused to come to Gondar. The same evening arrived also

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* The last entry which Luigi Balugani, Mr Bruce's assistant, made in the Journals is dated about this time, in these words,

Gonder, Febraro 1771.

Feb. 14th, 12 matt. . 21 . 6 . 8 . . 72½ . S.W. nebbie grandi, branchi.

1. . . . . sudette, ... \

2 sera . 21 . 6 . 7 . . 75 . . N.W. volanti per tutta l'aria.

messengers from Gusho and Powussen, declaring to Ras Michael, that, if he did not leave Gondar and return to Tigre, they would come and burn the town. They professed great duty to the king, but charged the Ras with every sort of enormity, and upon his refusal sent him a defiance.

The same evening came an express from Shoa, which most punctually brought the book I so much wished for, containing the lives of the first kings that lived at Shoa; a fair and fine copy, wrote upon parchment in a large quarto size, in the pure ancient language of Geez. The author was nearly contemporary with the annals which he writes. I shewed it to the king, who till then had never seen it, and who only said, "I fear, Yagoube, you are carrying home these books only to make your kings laugh at ours." The satisfaction I received upon the acquisition of this book was greatly diminished by the loss of the donor. Amha Yasous, who set out the 20th of February, attended with about an hundred men, his own servants, and followed by the regret and the good wishes of all that had known him, mine in particular, having been, from the first time I saw him, very much attached to him.

Before his departure he had two long conferences with the king upon the contents of the dispatches sent by his father from Shoa. The substance he frankly told me was, that he did not intend to meddle with the quarrels of Ras Michael, nor those of Fasil; that they should settle these in their own way; but if either attempted any thing against the king, set up any usurpers, as they had done in the person of Socinios, and continued so far against their allegiance to Tecla Haimanout as to withhold his whole revenue, and not to pay him wherewithal to support his state, that he would consider himself as protector of the royal family

of Solomon, as the governors of Shoa had always been.—It was believed very generally, by Amha Yasous coming in person, that a treaty between some of the great men, begun at his instance, would bring every man that could mount a horse, from as far south as Gingiro, to over-run both the provinces of Begemder and Amhara, and either displace the two governors, or at least force them to their duty; and it was owing to this, in all probability, that Gusho acted with such moderation as he did in the campaign that soon followed.

CHAP. V.

Rebel Army approaches Gondar—King marches out of Gondar—Takes post at Serbraxos—The Author returns to Gondar with Confu wounded.

GENTLE showers of rain began now to fall, and to announce the approach of winter; nay, some unusually severe and copious had already fallen. Gusho and Powussen, of Amhara and Begemder, Kasmati Ayabdar, governor of Foggoro, Aylo, son of Ozoro Welleta Israel, the queen's daughter, governor of Gojam, Woodage Asahel, with the troops of Maitsha, and Coque Abou Barea from Kuara, were at the head of all the forces they could raise about Emfras and Nabca, and the borders of the lake Tzana. A brother-in-law of Powussen had brought a considerable body of troops from Zaat and Dehanna, two clans of Lasta, enemies to Guigarr, who had declared for Michael; and these were the best horse in the rebel army, superior to any in Begemder.

This numerous army of confederates were all ready, expecting the rain would make the Tacazze impassable, and cut off Michael's retreat to Tigre. Fasil alone kept them in suspence, who, with about 12,000 men, remained at Ibaba, professing to be at peace with Michael, in the mean time keeping all Maitsha quiet, and waiting for the coming of Welleta Yasous, and

20,000 Galla, whom he had sent for from the other side of the Nile, intending, as he said, to march on the arrival of this reinforcement, and join the king at Gondar. Although it may well be doubted if ever he intended all or any part of this, one thing was very certain that he was sincere in his hatred to Gusho and Powussen; he never could forget their treachery in breaking their appointment and promise at Court-Onha, and exposing him either to fight Michael singly, or have his whole country burnt and destroyed. Although Michael had, for these last months, done every thing in his power to bring back to the king such people of consideration as possessed the lands and estates about Gondar, and were the most respectable of their nobility for influence and riches, bred up about court, and who did chiefly constitute it; yet the cruelty of his executions, his insatiable greed of money and power, and the extreme facility with which he broke his most sacred engagements, had terrified them from putting themselves into his hand; though they did not raise men, or join any side, but lived privately at a distance, yet their absence from about the king had the very worst effect upon his affairs. A great desertion had likewise happened since his coming among his old troops of Tigre, both of officers and soldiers. The execution of Guebra Denghel, and other two noblemen, had greatly alienated the minds of many of their countrymen and their connections; but, above all, his breach of promise made before the mountain of Haramat, that he was to levy no taxes upon that province for seven years (but which he was now doing with the greatest rigour before one had expired), discontented them all.

The return of Welleta Michael and Kefla Yasous from Samen, with about 6000 men, had considerably strengthened his army: added to this, 2000 more,

who came voluntarily, from their love to Kefla Yasous, from Temben, where he was governor; these were picked men, partly musqueteers; there was nothing equal to them in the army.

Gusho was advanced to Minziro. Powussen had his head-quarters at Korreva, not above sixteen miles from Gondar. The whole plain to the lake was covered with troops. The weather was unseasonably cold, and considerable quantities of rain had fallen from the 23d of February to the 29th of March. The rebels had begun to lay waste Dembea, and burnt all the villages in the plain from south to west, making it like a desert between Michael and Fasil, as far as they dared venture to advance towards either. This they did to exasperate Michael, and draw him out from Gondar; for they had most of them great property in the town, and did not wish to be obliged to fight him there. He bore this sight very impatiently, as well as the constant complaints of people flying into the town from the depredations of the enemy, and stripped of every thing.

The king often ascended to the top of the tower of his palace, the only one to which there remains a stair, and there contemplated, with the greatest displeasure, the burning of his rich villages in Dembea. One day while he was here he shewed an instance of that quick penetration for which he was remarkable, and which, as a proof of this, I shall here mention.

There is a large waste space on each side of the palace, where the market is kept. It had rained, and it was in the evening almost destitute of people; there were only two men at a considerable distance, who seemed to be in close conversation together, one of them apparently very much the worse of liquor, the other had hold of the end of the sash, or girdle, which was round the body of the drunken man; it is a nar-

row web of cotton cloth, which they wind eight or ten times about their waist. The king said to me, "Do you know, Yagoube, what these two men are about?" I answered, "No." I saw the drunkard untwine one turn of his sash, which the other was feeling and looking curiously at, as if examining and doubting its goodness. "That man," says the king, "is robbing the drunkard of his sash: go down two or three of you who run best, and apprehend him, but hide yourselves till he has committed the theft, and seize him as he passes." The orders were quickly obeyed; the drunkard unbound his sash, by turning himself round and round, while the other seemed to be measuring it by the length of his arm, from his elbow to his forefinger, and then gathering it up. This was done very deliberately till it was all unwound, and the far end loose; upon which the fellow, who was measuring, gathering it in his arms, ran off as fast as he could, leaving the drunkard standing motionless, apparently in great surprise and amazement. The thief was immediately seized and brought up to the king, who ordered him to be thrown over the tower. At my intercession, and that of those about him, he was pardoned, and the drunkard's sash was returned to him.

Ever since the middle of February, Ras Michael had resolved to march out, and give battle to the rebels encamped about Korreva, commiting every sort of violence, and burning all the villages, houses, and barns in Dembea, with the corn they contained more than what served for their present use; but the great superiority of the enemy in horse had always made him delay his intention.

Yasine had, indeed, succeeded in his commission to Sennaar, as far as it regarded the horses. He had found the Arabs encamped immediately upon the fron-

tier at Ras el Feel, and had received from them very near 200 of one kind or other, of which 76 only answered the purpose of mounting the king's black servants; the others were distributed among the rest of the army that wanted them. But they had not been equally successful in purchasing their coats of mail, fourteen only of which had been brought with the horses. In order to buy the rest, the messenger continued his journey to Sennaar, and with him my servant Soliman with my letters, to which, of consequence, I had as yet no return. But what appeared at that time most material to me, Fidele, Shekh of Atbara, wrote to Yasine, "That there was no fear but that I should be well received at Sennaar, where Nasser, a young king, had succeeded his father, whom he had deposed; but that the great difficulty was to pass between Ras el Feel and Teawa, the place of his residence, and from thence to the banks of the river Dender; for that the Ganjar horse of Kuara, and the Arabs their friends, were at war with the Arabs of Atbara, and had burnt all their crops and villages: that he sometimes did not think himself safe in Teawa, and that a load of salt had not been suffered to pass for several months; which, indeed, was the reason why the Arabs of Atbara were come so near Ras el Feel, and that the king's horse were procured so readily at the first coming." This traitor, however, added, "That if, by any means, I could advance to him at Teawa, I need not take any thought about the rest of the journey; and that it was better I should come quietly and quickly, without writing to Sennaar before hand: and he concluded with great professions of respect and friendship for me."

It had been very cold, and more than usual rainy, since the beginning of February; the 9th was a day of close rain; and this, being earlier than common,

very much discouraged the soldiers, who were naked, and therefore very sensible of cold, or rain; and, as I have before said, never can be brought to engage willingly, unless under the influence of a warm sun.

At last the cries of the people flying into Gondar, seeking protection from the cruelties of the rebels, determined the Ras to march out, and set his all upon the fortune of a battle. The risk was not thought great, as he had been all his life in use to conquer; had a better army at that time than ever he commanded; the Begemder troops, too, in whom the rebels trusted most, were but those which he and his men had beaten at Nefas Musa, although led by a very brave and valiant officer, Mariam Barea. All this was true; but then, since that period, these troops of Begemder had been constantly led by himself, had been trained, and disciplined with the old troops of Tigre, and taught to conquer with them. Above all, they had been used to see the effect of fire-arms, which they no longer feared as formerly, but boldly rushed in upon the musketeers, sometimes without giving them time to fire, or at least before they had time to charge again.

At last, having previously called in all his outposts, on the 13th of May he marched out of Gondar, taking with him the King and Abuna, as also Ozoro Esther, and Ozoro Altash her sister, and all the other ladies about court, who were in possession of the great fiefs of the crown, and whom he obliged to personal attendance, as well as to bring the quota of troops they were bound to by their respective tenures.

The king's army halted upon the same ground they had done on their return to Gondar. They were then supposed to be near 20,000 foot, belonging to Tigre and its dependencies, incomparably the best troops of

the empire, 6000 of which were armed with muskets, six times the number that all the rest of Abyssinia could furnish, and, considering they were all match-locks, very expert in the management of them. The rest of the foot which joined them since he passed the Tacazze were about 10,000, besides 2000 of the king's household, 500 of which were horsemen; of these, few short of 200 were his black servants, armed with coats of mail, the horses with plates of brass on their cheeks and faces, with a sharp iron spike of about five inches in length, which stuck out in the middle of their forehead, a very troublesome, useless piece of their armour; their bridles were iron chains; the body of the horse covered with a kind of thin quilt stuffed with cotton, with two openings made above the flaps of the saddle, into which the horseman put his thighs and legs, and which covered him from his hip (where his shirt of mail ended) down to a little above his ancle: his feet were covered with slippers of thin leather, without heels, and his stirrups were of the Turkish or Moorish form, into which his whole foot entered, and, being hung very short, he could raise himself, and stand as firmly as if he was upon plain ground. The saddles were in the Moorish form likewise, high before and behind; a strong lace made fast to the coat of mail by the one end, the other passed through a small hole in the back of the saddle, kept it close down, so that the back was never exposed by the coat of mail rising over the hinder part of the saddle. Each had a small axe in the surcingle of his saddle, and a pike about fourteen feet long, the weapon with which he charged; it was made of very light wood, brought from the banks of the Nile, with a small four-edged head, and the butt end balanced by a long spike of iron; this entered a leather case fastened by a thong to the saddle, and was rested sometimes below the

thigh, and sometimes above, and guided by the right hand at the height the point was intended to strike at. The horseman's head was covered with a helmet of copper, or block tin, much like those of our light horse, with large crests of black horse tail.

The officers were distinguished from the soldiers by locks of hair dyed yellow, interspersed with the black. Upon the front of each helmet was a silver star, at least a white-metal one; and before the face, down to the top of the nose, a flap of iron chain, made in the same manner as the coat of mail, but only lighter, which served as a vizor. This was the most troublesome part of the whole, it was hot and heavy, and constantly fretted the cheek and nose, when either the man or the horse were in motion; and therefore I always substituted a black silk net, which concealed my colour better, and for the rest of my face I committed it to the care of Providence.

This body of horse was able to make their way through all the cavalry in Abyssinia, if they had been drawn up against them with equal fronts; for every horseman sat immoveable upon his saddle, and acted most powerfully by his weight alone, and was perfectly master of his person also by the breadth and shortness of his stirrups; whereas the Abyssinian horsemen were placed most disadvantageously, their head and body naked, their saddle small, and of no support to them, their stirrup-leathers long, and no stirrups to put their foot in; but being constantly afraid of their horse falling upon them, the only hold which they had was the outside of an iron ring, which they grasped between their great and second toe, so that they had no strength from their stirrups, whilst their foot was always swelled, and their toes sore and galled.

Of the thousand Shoa horse about 60 had deserted;

the rest were all in good order, each armed with their lances about ten feet long, and two light javelins, their shafts being of cane, which they threw at a great distance; the lance they never loosed out of their hand; as for their stirrups and saddle, they were of the same bad construction as those of the Abyssinians in general, and this reduced them nearly to a footing with them.

The horsemen of the king's army were about 7000, mostly very indifferent troops; so that his whole muster was nearly 7000 musketeers, 25,000 foot, armed with lances and shields, and about 7500 horsemen; in round numbers about 40,000 men. It is not possible, I believe, to know, with greater precision, the number; such is the confusion of barbarous enemies on these occasions, and such the inclination of their leaders to magnify and increase their quotas. Besides these, Ayto Confu and Sanuda were left with about 600 men each, to protect Gondar from flying, pillaging parties, and to keep the communication open between the army and the capital, from whence the provisions were to be supplied.

This army was furnished with a number of excellent officers, veterans of noble families, who had spent their whole life in war; which we may say, for these last 400 years, has never ceased to lay desolate this unhappy country; the principal were Ras Michael, who, arrived at the age of 74, had passed the last 50 years of his life in a course of continued victories; Atsham Georgis, and Guebra Christos, uncles by the mother's side to the king; Kefla Yasous, in the full vigour of life, who, though unhappily born in a country plunged in ignorance, and where there is no education, possessed every quality that became a man, whether a soldier, statesman, citizen, or friend; Welleta Michael, master of the household to the king;

Billetana Gueta Tecla; Basha Hezekias, and Guebra Mascal, two principal officers of his musketry, and a great number of others of equal merit, known better in the camp than at the court; Aylo, and Engedan, two sons of Kasmati Eshte; Ayto Confu, son of Ozoro Esther; all young men, employed generally in enterprises, and growing every day more and more into reputation.

It is impossible so much as to guess at the number of the enemy; they were always very numerous, but constantly changing. It was said, that Begemder and Lasta, had at one time 50,000 horsemen; I should believe this number greatly exaggerated, from what I heard afterwards; and that the whole cavalry in their army did not exceed what it was at the battle of Serbraxos. I suppose, indeed, that, together with their foot, they did not much exceed that number, though, they were at times magnified to 50 and 60,000, most of them very bad troops, continually deserting, excepting about 4000 men belonging to Gusho, from Ambara, who likewise brought about 100 match-locks, and besides these there were scarcely any in the rebel army. I must not, however, forget 200 horsemen, Edjow Galla, servants and relations of the late king Joas, who behaved in the most gallant and undaunted manner, and upon all occasions set a noble example to the rest of the army.

Ras Michael himself led the van; the king the centre, with Guebra Mascal, and a considerable body of musketeers of Tigre; he had no horse but those of his own household. The rear was commanded by Welleta Michael, and Tecla: how disposed, or of what troops constituted, I know not; for the front, centre, and rear, were understood to march in order, but it was often impossible to discern any such divisions; we were often all in confusion, sometimes we

were in the middle of the front, sometimes joined and mixed with the rear; all our officers had left their command, and were crowding about Ras Michael and the king; women bearing provisions, horns of liquor, and mills for grinding corn, upon their backs; idle women of all sorts, half dead with fear, crying and roaring, mounted upon mules; and men driving mules loaded with baggage, mingled with the troops, and passing through in all directions, presented such a tumultuous appearance that it surpassed all description. There were above 10,000 women accompanying the army: the Ras had about 50 loaded with bouza, and the king I suppose near as many.

The sight threw me for a moment into low spirits. I know not if the king saw it. I was perfectly silent, when he cried, "Well, what do you say to us now, Yagoube?" I answered, "Is this the order in which your majesty means to engage?" He laughed, and said, "Aye; why not, you will see." "If that is so," I replied, "I only hope it is the enemy's custom, as well as your majesty's, to be in no better order." The king was going to answer me, when Guebra Mascal, who was just beside him, cried out, "This is a business you know nothing about, Yagoube; go to your Felac (quadrant), and your fortune-telling, if you are afraid; we have no need of you, nor your advice to-day." "Respect for the presence of the king, which you seem to be void of," said I, "hinders me from answering you as I otherwise would have done; but be assured, in which ever army they were to-day, they are not men like Guebra Mascal, whom I should be afraid of." The king looked at him much displeased, and, I believe, said something favourable of me; what it was I did not distinctly hear.

It was now about ten o'clock, when, marching close along the foot of the hills, we arrived at Tedda. The

burying place of Hatze Hannes I. son of Facilidas, and father of Yasous the Great, was scarce a quarter of a mile to the S. W. of us, and the church of St George a little more on the east, when orders came from the Ras for us to encamp on the side of the hill, which we accordingly did, and were presently in better order than we were when marching. The Ras, who had passed the river of Tedda, encamped on the south side of it. It happened that our two bodies, the front and centre, were at that time treading upon one another's heels; but the rear, from some accident, was considerably behind, and part of it had scarce passed the Mogetch.

Both the burying-place, and church near it, were planted thick round with cyprus and cedar trees. Just a little before the Ras ordered us to encamp, a messenger arrived from Netcho (the Fit-Auraris), that he had that morning met the Fit-Auraris of Begemder on this side of the river Mariam; that he had killed the Fit-Auraris himself (a man of Lasta), with 37 of his men and driven them back: he added, that he intended to fall back himself upon the Ras's army, unless stopt by contrary orders; these the Ras did not send, being desirous that he should join him, as he soon after did, without being pursued: he brought word that the army of the rebels was near at hand, between Korreva and the lake; that Powussen's headquarters were at Korreva, and that he had heard Gusho had pushed on advanced posts, as far as the church of Mariam; but this he did not know for certain, being only the information of a dying man. Ras Michael immediately detached Guebra Mascal, and another officer, with 400 men, to take possession of the sepulchre and the church at Tedda, and conceal themselves among the cedar-trees.

We had not encamped long, before the rear came in sight. Confu, son of Ozoro Esther, whom the Ras had left to guard Gondar, hearing how near the enemy was, and the probability of a battle that day, had left his post, and joined Yasine, with the horse of Ras el Feel, that were in the rear; soon after this junction, Woodage Asahel, with about 400 men, partly Edjow Galla (the late king Joas's household), partly Maitsha, came up from the Dembea side of the lake Tzana, and began to harass the rear, marching in great confusion. Confu, though something superior in number, was thought to be inferior in the goodness of troops by much more than the difference; but the event proved the contrary, for he charged Woodage Asahel so forcibly, that he obliged him to quit our rear, and retire across the plain at a pace, which, if not a flight, did very much resemble it. Ayto Confu pressed vigorously upon him, till, being now clear of the rest of the army, and in the fair open plain, Woodage wheeled shortly about, and shewed by his countenance that it was not to avoid Ayto Confu, but Ras Michael's musquetry, that he retreated to a greater distance; both sides stopt to breathe their horses for some minutes; but it was plain afterwards, Asahel Woodage, an old soldier, trusted much to the known valour of his troops, and wished to strike a blow of consequence in presence of his old enemy the Ras.

Ras Michael was at the door of his tent then playing at dams or drafts, as was his custom; and Ozoro Esther was trembling to see her son on the point of being surrounded by merciless Galla, the nation whom most of all she detested, and who had every cause to hate her. All the young men (Confu's friends), with their lances in their hands, and ready to mount on horseback, beseeched the Ras to allow them to go

down into the plain to the assistance of Confu; but the old general, without leaving off his game, said, "I do strictly forbid one of you to stir; Confu has broke my orders to-day, and brought himself into a scrape by his own folly; let me see him get out of it by his courage and conduct, and thereby set the army a better example than he yet has done"—"Sir," said I, "at least station some musquetry on the small hill, at the edge of the plain, that, if Confu is beaten, I may not have the mortification of seeing Yasine, and the new troops of Ras el Feel (who were in their proper post), and have all my baggage and provisions, massacred before my eyes by these cowardly barbarians." I spoke this in the utmost anguish, when the Ras lifted up his head with a ghastly kind of laugh, and said, "Right; well, do so, Yagoube." Though this was but an imperfect permission, I ran down to the station with such haste that I fell twice in my way, and was considerably hurt, for the ground was rocky, and the grass slippery.

Although I had only waved my cloak, and cried "Come on sirs!" a large number of matchlocks of Ozoro Esther's and the king's hastened immediately to the ground. Confu, by this time had charged, and after a stout resistance beat Woodage back into the plain; Woodage, however, again faced about, and after some resistance, Confu in his turn was driven back in evident disorder, and pushed almost in upon the post, where our soldiers had made ready their muskets, to fire if they came a step nearer. At this instant a body of about 30 or 40 horse (the commander we afterwards knew to be Ayto Engedan) came up full gallop from the right, and stopt the Galla in their pursuit. Confu's men rallied upon this assistance, and Asahel Woodage retired in a direction passing close under the sepulchre,

Engedan and Confu keeping at a moderate pace on his left between them and the army, and forcing them down, as it were, to the trap they knew was laid for them. They were yet a long shot from the cedars that surrounded the sepulchre, when a volley was discharged at them from among the trees, where Michael had posted his 400 men, which, though it did little or no execution, terrified Woodage Asahel's men so much, that Confu and Engedan, charging in that instant as upon a signal, they all dispersed through different parts of the field, and their leader after them; Joas's Edjow, indeed, would not fall back a step upon the volley, but, after an obstinate resistance, they were broken by superior numbers, and forced to retreat before an enemy, so overcome with fatigue and wounds, as to be unable to pursue them.

The whole of this engagement lasted near an hour by my watch. One hundred and thirteen of Woodage Asahel's men were slain on the spot, and their bloody trophies brought and thrown before the king. On Confu's side about 70 were killed and wounded; he himself received two wounds, one a large flesh wound in the hip, the other more slight upon the head, both of them at the very beginning of the engagement.

Notwithstanding the natural hardness of his heart, and that the misfortune which had happened was in immediate disobedience of orders, Ras Michael shewed great sensibility at hearing Confu was wounded; he came immediately to see him, a visit not according to etiquette, and gave him a slighter reproof than was expected for leaving his post in the town, as well as for his fighting without his orders. Confu, with great submission and address at the same time, excused his leaving his post, from the repeated information he had received that a decisive battle was to be fought that

day, and knowing the Ras's want of horse, he could not stay at Gondar, and keep his idle, when the fate of so kind a father (as the Ras had been), and that of a mother, to whom he owed every thing, was depending. He said it would be more agreeable to him to die by the hands of the executioner of the camp, as an example for disobedience of orders, than survive with the reflection that he had been voluntarily absent from such an occasion. As for engaging with Asahel Woodage that day, he said he had no intention of that kind; that he knew not who he was when he attacked him, and only endeavoured to hinder him from harassing the rear of the army, and destroying the provisions; that when he charged him first, Woodage was among the women, loaded with bouza, flour, and spirits, which were coming to the Ras, and great part of which he had intercepted, as the Ras would find. Michael could not help laughing at this last part of the excuse; but went away, and, in his conversation that evening, gave Confu, the highest praises for his conduct and bravery, but said nothing of his fault.

Engedan was next arraigned for fighting without orders. He, too, answered with great humility, "That when he saw the infantry run down the hill, with their matches lighted, he thought it was the Ras's intention to relieve Confu by the most effectual means possible; but at any rate he could never, with arms in his hands, stand looking on, while his cousin-german and companion was massacred by Galla." All ended well. The truth is, Michael never would find fault with a man that fought, however imprudently he sought the occasion: courage was to him in place of charity; it covered a multitude of sins.

Ozoro Esther, in the deepest concern, had attended her son from the moment of his arrival, and had

seen his wound dressed and swathed up. A large gaping flesh wound (such as his was) frightens ignorant people more than the small orifice made by a shot, which breaks bones and endangers life. Such was Ozoro Esther's apprehension; and every minute she inquired of me if I thought it was possible he could recover. I had not quitted him since he had got off his horse. I advised him by all means to go in a litter to Gondar, either carried by men or mules; but no persuasion, nor consideration, would induce him to go otherwise than on a mule, with his horse harnessed and led by him.

Every thing was accordingly prepared, when I received a message from the Ras to wait upon him. I immediately went to his tent, and found him with two dwarf boys only, who were fanning the flies from his face. "Ozoro Esther wishes," says he, "that you would see Confu safe to Gondar, and bring us word to-morrow how he is; and you must stay with him altogether, if he is in danger."—"If he has no fever," said I, "he is in no danger. If the king and you,"—He then interrupted me,—"The king, and I, and every one, wishes you to attend Confu." I bowed, and went away without reply. When I was got to the door he cried after me, "Don't be afraid, you will be in time enough to see every thing; neither they nor I wish an engagement but at Serbraxos."

I did not understand the meaning of the speech, but went away without reply straight to the king's tent; and I was just going to speak when he stopt me, by crying, "Go, go, for God's sake! Ozoro Esther has been here almost out of her senses." I went on this to her tent, where I found her sitting by Confu and drowned in tears, which at times were interrupted by fits of seeming distraction. He began to feel the loss

of blood, which would have made me wish not to move him; but there was no staying here for sick people; and so violent a spirit had spread through the army, upon Netcho's success and Confu's victory, that one and all insisted upon fighting the next day; and several of my friends, who knew where I was going, shook hands with me at my passing them, saying, "Farewell, Yagoube; we are sorry to lose you, but all will be over before you return."

I now insisted more than ever upon Confu's going in a litter, and setting out immediately, which was accordingly complied with. Ozoro Esther had dinner, or rather supper, ready in a moment, and I had great need of it, having scarcely tasted any thing for two days. While I was eating, Ozoro Esther could not stop the effusions of her gratitude for the care I had again taken of Confu. "I knew," says she, "you would have refused me, if I had endeavoured to persuade you to go away from the camp, when there are such fair expectations you may be knocked on the head to-morrow; and therefore I applied to the Ras by force to bend that rash proud spirit of yours, which one day will be the occasion of your death."—"Madam," said I, "you do me injustice if you will not believe that I had rather obey your commands than those of any general upon earth: But, pray, what is the meaning of the Ras's speech to me about both armies wishing to fight at Serbraxos * ? Where is this Serbraxos?"—"Why," says she, "here, on a hill just by; the Begemder people have a prophecy, that one of their governors is to fight a king at Serbraxos, to defeat him, and slay him there: in his

* Serbraxos, abbreviation for Serta Christos, the Cross of Christ.

place is to succeed another king, whose name is Theodorus, and in whose reign all Abyssinia is to be free from war, or from any trouble, sickness, or famine; that the Galla, Shangalla, and Mahometans are all to be destroyed, and the empire of Abyssinia to be extended as far as Jerusalem."—"All this destruction and conquest without war! That will be curious indeed. I think I could wish to see this Theodorus," said I, laughing. "See him you will," replied Ozoro Esther; "peace, happiness, and plenty will last all his reign, and a thousand years afterwards. Enoch and Elias will rise again, and will fight and destroy Gog and Magog, and all this without any war." On which I again said, "That must be cleverly managed. And now, why does Ras Michael choose to fight at Serbraxos? I do not think he is desirous to pay his court to the king Theodorus or any thing brought him by Begemder."—"Why," says she, "all the hermits and holy men on our side, that can prophecy, have assured him he is to beat the rebels this month at Serbraxos; and a very holy man, a hermit from Waldubba, came to him at Gondar, and obliged him to march out against his will, by telling him this prophecy, which he knows to be true, as the man is not like common prophets, but one who never ate any thing but roots, or drank other liquor than water, since the day of his nativity. Such a man as this, you know, Yagoube, cannot lie." "And I," says Ayto Confu, "being a prophet that hath ate beef and drank bouza ever since my nativity, whenever I could not get wine or brandy, and who gave my share of water freely to the saints of Waldubba, as a proper reward for the lies they tell, I do prophecy, that there are now two thousand men eating their supper within sight of Serbraxos, who will never see it nearer, but will all be slain in a battle fought at this place to-mor-

row, at which time Yagoube shall be feasting with me at Gondar, without caring a fig for king Theodorus and his plenty."—"A blessed prophet you!" says Ozoro Esther.

At this instant the servants at the door informed us there was scarce light to see the way down the hill, and we got our wounded prophet, without much difficulty or complaint, into the litter. A number of men supported him down the hill, and about 50 of his own horse attended. I desired him to feel often the bandage if his wound bled; and, finding it did not, I rode on horseback close by his side. For some time, not hearing him stir or speak, I thought he was asleep, or had fainted; on which I stopt the litter, felt his pulse, and asked him if he was dosing? He said, "No; he was thinking of all the lies his mother had been telling me: but there is one thing she did not care to tell you, Yagoube, she says you laugh at these stories; but there is a spirit who always appears to Michael and assures him of victory." "The devil," said I, "probably; for what good arises from all these victories? are they not the ruin of innocent people, and of the country?" "No," replied Confu, "it is St Michael, the archangel; he saw him just before he surprised the mountain Haramat, but neither at Gondar, nor since he passed the Tacazze, and this makes him sorrowful." "The spirit has been afraid to catch cold," said I, "by wetting his feet in that cold river." "I doubt so," answered Confu: "but the liar of a monk, who my mother supposes never eats nor drinks, told him he was to see him at Serbraxos."

At this time we heard the noise of horses, and could discern (as we thought) three men that passed the bridge of Mogetch briskly before us. As they seemed to avoid us, six or eight of Confu's men pursued them at full gallop, but lost them in the

darkness. They, however, were found to be soldiers of Kasmati Sanuda, who hearing Woodage Asahel had been engaged with Ayto Confu, had come out with the unworthy purpose of collecting some filthy trophies by mangling the dead, or wounded, though these must have been their own companions, the soldiers of Ayto Confu, who had been slain; for the whole of Woodage Asahel's men had already undergone what Strates emphatically called the operation, by the knives of Confu's soldiers. We now arrived at Koscam without any adventure, and Confu was laid to repose, after taking a little food: in obedience to the orders of Ozoro Esther, I lay down by him in the same apartment.

Early next morning I was sent for by a servant of Ozoro Esther, to attend Welleta Selasse, who, I was told, was at the point of death. I repaired immediately to the house of Ras Michael, where she then was, but found her without possibility of recovery, having already lost her speech. She expired a few minutes afterwards, apparently in violent agonies. The cause was never properly known; some attributed it to the jealousy of Ozoro Esther, others alleged that she had taken poison from apprehension of falling into the hands of Ras Michael: whatever was the truth, her servants certainly told me, that she had confessed she had taken poison; and not till the pain became violent, and then she turned afraid, would she consent to have an express sent to Ozoro Esther, to bring me from the camp. I had unluckily left it before to attend Ayto Confu, neither is it probable I could have been of any service, as the poison she had taken was arsenic. This accident detained me that whole day, so that, instead of returning to the army, I went to Ayto Confu at Koscam, where I found another messenger in search of me.

The king's Mahometan was returned from Sennaar, and with him Soliman, my servant, who brought me answers to the letters I had written; they had come by Beyla to Ras el Feel, by Sim Sim, and the western deserts, the way to Teawa being much infested by gangs of Arabs, and Ganjar horse, who murdered every body they found in their way. They brought with them only twelve horses, eighteen coats of mail, and about thirty libd*: these were mostly returns made by the principal members of government to the presents the king had sent them; for every body at Sennaar now set too great a value upon armour, and horses, to part easily with them, on account of the unsettled state of the times, the history of which we shall give afterwards.

My letters informed me that the whole kingdom of Sennaar was in arms, and that Nasser (who had deposed his father by the help of two great brothers, Mahomet Abou Calec, and Adelan), was upon the point of trusting his life and kingdom to the event of a battle with these two officers. I was, moreover, conjured, with all the earnestness, as I thought, of a truly honest man, that I would by no means undertake the journey I intended; that to come from Ras el Feel to Sennaar, was, for a white man like me, next to an absolute impossibility, connecting the danger of the way with the great hardships from the excessive heat of the climate, and want of food and water; that even arrived at Sennaar, I should be in the utmost danger from the soldiery, and the king's slaves, under no subordination, or government; and that, even if I was

* These are leather coats quilted with cotton, used instead of coats of mail: both man and horse are covered with them, and they give to both a monstrous appearance.

happy enough to escape these, the worst still remained, and no human power could convoy, or protect me, in my remaining journey to Egypt through the great desert. I was therefore begged to lay all such intention aside as impossible, and either stay where I was, or return by Tigre, Masuah, and Arabia, the way by which I first entered Abyssinia. This was the severest of all blows to me, and threw me for some time into the lowest despondency; but it did not change my resolution, which was already taken, not to turn to the right or the left, but either complete my journey to Syene, the frontier of Egypt, by Sennaar, and Nubia, or perish in the attempt.

I now resolved to proceed immediately to the camp, taking twenty horse from Sanuda, and twenty from Confu, to escort the coats of mail and horses from Sennaar. I set out that evening with Mahomet, the king's servant, by the road of Sema Couffi, and arrived about nine o'clock in the camp, without any adventure, bringing the news of Welleta Selasse's death, which seemed to cause neither surprise nor sorrow, and was never after spoken of either by the Ras, or Ozoro Esther; but very great rejoicings were made at the good accounts of Ayto Confu, with very kind expressions of me, both from the Ras and Ozoro Esther.

Before he went to bed, the king had examined Mahomet, and drawn from him the true state of the kingdom of Sennaar; he then sent for me, and ordered me to deliver him my letters, which I did, interpreting them to him, word for word. He said, however, but little at this time, as he thought that that door being so effectually shut against me, less could be urged against the safer and more known road through Tigre, which, of course, it was presumed I should more eagerly embrace; he kept my letters, and or-

dered me to choose two of the horses for myself, which I did, one of them near seventeen hands high, I suppose one of the most powerful horses in the world.—The rest he distributed among the black troops; the same he did with the coats of mail. I found the army in great spirits, but still the story of fighting only at Serbraxos seemed to be obstinately persisted in. I asked Ozoro Esther if St Michael had yet appeared to the Ras, she answered; "Hush! for God's sake, don't make a joke of this! one word of this kind repeated to him would prevent your ever receiving a favour from Michael."

It happened that, the day after I had attended Ayto Confu to Gondar, Ras Michael sent some soldiers into Dembea to forage; these had been intercepted by a party posted on purpose by Kasmati Ayabdar and Gusho, consisting of Edjow Galla, with some horse from Foggora and Amhara. An engagement happened pretty much in the same place and manner as that with Woodage Asahel and Ayto Confu, in full view of the camp, and assistance was sent on both sides to the respective parties. The troops commanded by Aylo, brother of Engedan, and Guebra Mascal, were beaten back almost close to the camp, by the horse led by the Edjow Galla, though brave and veteran soldiers; while Ras Michael ordered Yasine and his 200 from Ras el Feel (all with their libds on) to charge the Galla, now advanced very near. Each horse had a number of brass bells at his neck, and they no sooner appeared than the whole cavalry of the enemy, starting at the hideous figure and noise, fell into confusion, and, being closely pressed with violent blows of their great swords, no longer disputed the ground, but left the field on the gallop. A beautiful grey horse of Gusho's, superbly ornamented with gold and silver, and having a very rich broad-sword hanging at

his saddle, and a pole-axe on the other side under the surcingle, was taken by some soldiers of Ras el Feel, who spread the report instantly that Gusho was slain. Immediately on this, orders were given for the whole army to descend into the plain, which they did with great alacrity, forming in order of battle, though neither the king nor Ras Michael left the camp, nor did any adversary appear; and the troops, content with this bravado, returned again in great spirits to the camp.

This is the account I heard of that day's skirmish; for I was not present there, being at Gondar with Ayto Confu. In the evening of that very day arrived a messenger from Gusho, telling Ras Michael that a young boy, a nephew of his, had, without his knowledge, gone to see the engagement, and had taken with him his favourite horse, who, being frightened at the Arabs with their libds, had thrown him, after which he had run off and left the horse among the enemy. He begged to have his horse restored at any price, if the man that had taken him was allowed to sell him. He at the same time, sent a present of a large quantity of fruit and fresh fish from the lake. The messenger was a priest well-known by Ras Michael, and warmly attached to the king, and it was thought came with an errand of more consequence than either about the horse, or the fish. The Ras sent him for his answer to the king, who told him, the horse being taken by the troops of Ras el Feel, belonged to me, and with me he must make his bargain: that I was at Gondar, and my return uncertain; but that the next day he might have my answer. This was the better to conceal the priest's real business, for the king and Ras knew how they were to dispose of the horse; at least they certainly knew I was not to return him without their orders.

The morning after my arrival this same priest came to me with a message from Gusho, desiring I would send him his horse, as a proof of the friendship which he said had always subsisted between us, at the same time offering me any sum of money that I might have promised, to content the soldiers who took him. As I had before obtained leave from Ras Michael to restore the horse, so I did it with the very best grace possible, sending Yasine himself, chief of the troops of Ras el Feel, with the message to Gusho, that I reckoned myself exceedingly happy in having that opportunity of obliging him, and of shewing the value I had ever set upon his friendship; that he very well knew the little regard I had for money, and that the soldier, who took the horse, was my servant, and had already been abundantly satisfied. I desired Yasine to add, that I hoped, in order to a continuation of that friendship, he would avoid, in his own particular command, or in that of his relations, attacking where the king was in person, because it was my indispensible duty to be there, and that his nephew might not escape with the loss of his horse, if he again happened to be engaged with the Moorish troops, who, though under my command, were Mahometans, strangers to the language, and to whom it was impossible for me to convey any distinction of persons. Gusho was exceedingly sensible of this civil return of the horse; he clothed Yasine magnificently, made him a present of another horse, and sent a very flattering message by him to me.

CHAP. VI.

Michael attempts to enter Begemder—First Battle of Serbraxos—The Rebels offer Battle to the king in the Plain—Armies separated by a violent Storm.

YASINE had scarcely returned to the camp when all the tents were struck, and the army on its march.—The Ras and Guebra Mascal led the van, the king and Guebra Christos the centre, Kasmati Kefla Yasous the rear; Netcho, the Fit-Auraris, being about half an hour's march before us, we proceeded along the plain without interruption; Ayto Engedan, with a small body of horse, was covering the king's right flank at some distance. The church of Serbraxos was on our left upon the side of a hill, and we expected to see the Fit-Auraris take up his ground for encamping there, as it was the field of action determined upon by both parties. The Fit-Auraris, however, first, and then Ras Michael with the van, passed below Serbraxos at so brisk a pace, that we in the centre found it difficult to keep up with them.

A long valley, having the mountains of Begemder on the south, or farthest end, was what the Ras had

now entered, and he flattered himself, by a forced march, to arrive at those mountains. When once in Begemder, he knew that he not only should occasion a revolt among the troops of Powussen (many of whom had followed him by force rather than inclination); but likewise he was assured that he should be met by many powerful noblemen and friends to the king, both of Lasta and Begemder, whom Powussen dared not force to follow him, and who had staid at home. By this means, he conceived his army would be so much increased, that he soon should bring the rebels to reason.

The river Mariam runs along the west side of this valley, shallow, but brisk and clear, and the water excellent, while a small brook, called Deg-Ohha (that is, the water of honour, or of worth), falling from the mountains on the east, runs close by the bottom of the hill of Serbraxos, where it joins the Mariam. The centre of the army was just entering from the plain into the valley, and the king's horse passing Deg-Ohha, when we heard a firing in the front, which we guessed to be from the Fit-Aurari; soon after followed a repeated firing from the van, engaged about a short two miles distance, though a long even hill in the midst of the valley, and its windings, hindered us from seeing them.

Guebra Christos immediately made his disposition; he placed his horse, and foot in the intervals of the horse, in the middle of the valley; his musketry on the right and left; the former upon the skirts of the hill already mentioned, to run along the valley; the latter up the skirts of the hill of Serbraxos. Orders very soon arrived from Ras Michael, which did not alter the disposition; and Kefla Yasous with the rear arriving at the same time, just joined and doubled the several posts as they had been taken. Our position was

to the utmost of our wish; but it had not been so with Michael, for he no sooner had got into the plain, where he had the hills no longer either on his right or left, than he was attacked by Powussen, with the whole force of Begemder, who cut off the troops of his Fit-Auraris to a man, he, and two or three common soldiers, only escaping. This was owing to Michael's retreating instead of supporting him; for he had scarcely given time for Powussen to come up with his horse, who fought more desperately than was their usual custom, than he himself again took possession of the entrance of the valley, and lined the hill on both sides with fire-arms. A very general and sharp fire from Guebra Mascal, and the musketry (who had occupied the south end of the long hill), soon obliged Powussen to leave Michael's cavalry, which he would else have inevitably destroyed, and shelter himself in the plain from the violent effect of the shot, which rained upon him alternately from the hills on each side of the valley.

At this time we were in the greatest anxiety, from the report of the muskets always coming nearer us, though, by the contrary winds, the smoke was carried from us. The day was far advanced, and excessively hot: the foot-soldiers were busy in giving our horses drink out of our own helmets, which they filled from Deg-Ohha. All the troops were impatient, however, to come to an action upon that ground. At this time an officer from Michael came to Kefla Yasous, who was on horseback near the king, ordering him to send a body of fresh horse to support the cavalry of his division, with an intention, if possible, to bring on a general engagement. In the mean time, he ordered Kefla Yasous to keep firm, as he then was, in the post of Serbraxos, and not to advance till he was sure that Gusho and Ayabdar had left their ground, joined Powussen, and

were engaged with him at the south end of the valley. These instructions were perfectly understood by that sagacious and veteran general. He detached 500 Shoa, with near the same number of horse belonging to Engedan, and commanded by him; and these, joined to the cavalry already in the van, again attempting to pass the plain, were attacked by Powussen and the troops of Begemder, who had been likewise reinforced, and after an obstinate engagement they had retired into the mouth of the valley, not from being actually beaten, but by direction of Ras Michael, in order to bring the enemy pursuing them under the fire of the musketry, on each side of the entrance of the valley.

I was exceedingly curious to have seen this engagement, and I begged Kefla Yasous to speak to the king to permit me to go singly with Engedan. To this, however, I had a flat refusal, not without some marks of peevishness and displeasure, which Kefla Yasous qualified by saying, "Don't be dismayed, you shall see;" and in that instant the word was given to march to the right, whilst the troops left the valley between the long hill and the mountains, and took post on the side of the river Mariam, with their faces fronting the west. The musketry was placed upon the eminences to the north and south, as if to defend the ford of the river through which the entrance was, to the north end of the valley. Michael, in the mean time, had, by the feigned retreat of his cavalry, decoyed the Begemder troops within reach of the musketry, and they were again put in disorder by the discharge on each side of the hill, without being able to advance a step further; after which he ordered some tents to be pitched upon the hill on his right, as if intending to encamp there.

Kasmati Ayabdar, who commanded the left wing of the rebels, imagining that the whole army had ad-

vanced to the south of the valley with Ras Michael, thought this was an opportunity of surrounding the king's troops, and cutting them off from their camp and strong post upon the hill of Serbraxos; with this intention he advanced rapidly to the ford of the river Mariam, thinking to take post on the hill which was to our rear, being that of Serbraxos. When he advanced, however, near that river, and saw the king and his cavalry drawn up on the banks of it, his heart failed him, and he halted within a short quarter of a mile of our troops. In order to decoy and make him more confident, Kefla Yasous ordered the horse to retreat and cross the river as fast as they could, with an appearance of confusion, that he might draw their horse within reach of our musketry planted upon every eminence. The king shewed great reluctance at this manœuvre, however wise. He repeated very peevishly, "What is this! What is this! Am I retiring before rebels?"—Neither *did this* stratagem succeed but in part; for Ayabdar, either distrusting the trap laid for him, or afraid to enter into an engagement with the king, advanced but a few paces, and again halted, apparently not decided what he was to do.

The Edjow Galla alone advanced to the very brink of the river, and when the musketry began to be fired at them, which would probably quickly have put them into confusion, the king, losing all patience, ordered the black horse, and all the heavy-armed troops, to charge them, which was instantly executed with the greatest speed; the Galla were all borne down, with little or no resistance, by the length of our pikes, and the superior weight of our horses, and those that were not slain were scattered over the plain. But a greater misfortune befel us from our friends than from our enemies, as a volley of shot was poured upon us from Serbraxos hill, on the right hand, which killed seven

men, notwithstanding their coats of mail. The king himself was in great danger, being in the middle of the engagement, and unarmed; young prince George, who fought by his side, was shot in the thumb of his left hand. Kefla Yasous, who saw the danger the king was in, riding about, holding out his hand and crying not to fire, was shot through the hair, the ball just grazing his head above the ear, and another wounding his horse just above his thigh, but so slightly, that it was afterwards extracted by a servant's fingers.

Ayabdar, after the loss of his Edjow Galla, retreated to the camp, amidst the curses and imprecations of the army, who, not informed of the king's strength, thought the war might have been ended by a proper exertion and perseverance on his part that day. Gusho, his nephew, who had staid to guard the camp, but who had reinforced Powussen and Ayabdar, each of them with a part of his troops, spoke of his uncle in the bitterest terms of reproach, continually calling him dotard and coward, and declaring him incapable of command or service. Whether this was really his opinion, or only said with a view of forwarding a scheme already laid, I will not say; but certainly it was the foundation of a quarrel, which, by its consequences, did greatly weaken the rebels, and contributed much afterwards to maintain the king upon the throne; for Gusho, who, upon the defeat of Ras Michael, was destined by all parties to take the lead, was as lavish in the praises of Powussen for his behaviour that day, as he was bitter in condemning his uncle, which created a violent misunderstanding between these two chiefs; insomuch, that Asahel Woodage, with his troops of Maitsha, left Ayabdar, and joined Powussen. Confu, moreover, son of Basha Eusebius, and brother to Guebra Mehedin, who had frustrated my first attempt to discover the source of

the Nile, endeavouring to promote a revolt among the troops of Foggora, to which he belonged, was put in irons by Ayabdar, from which he was but too soon released to meet, a few days afterwards, a fate that put an end to his profligacy and follies.

Powussen in this conflict had retreated, if not been beaten, with a considerable loss; nine hundred of his best troops were said to have been slain that day, and a great many more wounded, most of whom (those I mean, that had gun-shot wounds) died from the want of surgeons, and the ignorance of those who undertook to cure them. On the part of Michael about 300 men, all of the cavalry, were said to have perished that day, including the troops of Netcho, the Fit-Auraris. Of the king's division, about twenty-three were killed, seven of these being his guards, I believe mostly by the unfortunate fire of his troops, arising from his own impatience in attacking the Galla unadvisedly, of whom about sixty were *left upon the field*, all slain in the attack; for they were not pursued, but joined their main body immediately.

Ras Michael fell back upon the army, which had encamped on the hill of Serbraxos; and it now was believed more than before, that the fate of the empire was to be determined on that spot. Another thing, however, appeared plain, that whatever belief Michael pretended in the prophecy, he would not have preferred fighting at Seabraxos, if he could by any means have given the rebels the slip, and marched his army into Begemder. The king was exceedingly pleased at the part he had taken that day; it was the first time he was engaged in person, nor did any body venture to condemn it; he shewed, indeed, very little concern at his brother's wound, which was only a slight one in the fleshy part of his thumb, nor did the young prince trouble himself much about it; on the contra-

ry, when I went to dress and bind it up, he said to me, "I wish, Yagoube, the shot had carried the thumb off altogether; it would have made me incapable of succeeding to the throne, and they would not then send me to the hill of Wechne." The king, upon hearing this, said, with a smile, "George forgets that Hatze Hannes, my father and his, was called to the throne many years after his whole hand had been cut off." Every one agreed that Ras Michael had that day shewn a degree of intrepidity and military skill superior to any thing which had appeared in many former engagements in which he had commanded. No sooner had he refreshed himself with a meal, than he called a council of his officers, which lasted great part of the evening, notwithstanding the fatigue he had undergone throughout the day.

This was the first battle of Serbraxos, which, though it contained nothing decisive, had still two very material consequences; as it so daunted the spirit of the Begemder horse, that many chiefs of that country withdrew their troops and went home, whilst such discord was sown among the leaders, that I believe they never sincerely trusted one another afterwards; Gusho and Ayabdar, in particular, were known to correspond with the king daily.

On the morrow after the battle, three messengers arrived from Gusho, Powussen, and Ayabdar, and each had a separate audience of the King and Ras, before whom they all three severally declared, that their masters desired to continue in allegiance to him their king, Tecla Haimanout; but under this condition only, that Ras Michael should be sent to his government of Tigre, never more to return. They endeavoured to persuade the king also to take the sense of his army, the majority of which, they asserted, were ready to abandon him. If Michael should agree to return to

Tigre, they offered to carry the king to Gondar, place him in his palace, and allow him to choose his own ministers, and govern for the future after his own ideas. This, indeed, was the universal wish, and I did not see what Ras Michael could have done, had he adopted it; but fear, or gratitude, or both, restrained the young king from such a measure; and the messengers left him after a plain declaration, "That they had endeavoured all in their power to save him, and he must now abide the consequences, for they washed their hands of them."

The rains were now become more frequent, and an epidemical fever had shewn itself in the rebel army on the plain; every consideration, therefore, seemed to persuade a speedy decision; but the consequences of the last engagement seemed to have damped the spirit of the rebels, without having much raised that of the king's army. In fact, the days were dark and wet, and the nights cold, circumstances in which no Abyssinian chooses to fight. The army was thinly clothed, or not clothed at all, and encamped on high ground, where fuel, though it had not failed them yet, must soon have done so.

An accident, that happened this night, had nearly brought about a revolution, which the wisest heads had laboured for many years in vain. Ras Michael had retired to bed at his ordinary time, somewhat before eleven o'clock, and a lamp was left burning as usual in his tent, for he was afraid of *spirits*. He was just fallen asleep, when he felt a man's arm reach into the bed over him, which he immediately seized hold of, crying to his attendants, at the same time, for help. Those that ran first into the tent threw down the lamp and put out the light, so that the man would have escaped, had not the people behind got about him, and endeavoured to hold him down, while entangled in, and struggling with, the cords of the tent. The

first person that seized him was a favourite servant of the Ras, a young man, named Laeca Mariam, of a good family in Tigre; he, not perceiving his danger for want of light, received a stab with a broad knife, which pierced his heart, so that he fell without speaking a word. Numbers immediately secured the assassin, who was found to have dropt one knife within the Ras's tent, with which he had attempted at first to have stabbed him; but he was found to have another knife, two-edged, and sharp in the point, fixed along his arm, with which he had stabbed Laeca Mariam. This wretch was a native of a very barbarous nation near Shoa, south-east of Gojam. The name of their country is Gurague *. They are Troglodytes, and all robbers: their constant occupation is attending the Abyssinian camps, and stealing horses, mules, or whatever they can get, which they do in a very singular manner.

They all wear their hair very short, strip themselves stark naked, and besmear themselves from head to foot with butter, or some sort of grease, whilst, along the outside of their arm, they tie a long, straight, two-edged, sharp-pointed knife, the handle reaching into the palm of their hand, and about four inches of the blade above the knob of their elbow, so that the whole blade is safe and inoffensive when the arm is extended; but when it is bent, about four inches projects, and is bare beyond the elbow joint; this being all prepared, they take a leafy faggot, such as the gatherers of fuel bring to the camp, which they fasten to their middle by a string or withy, spreading it over to conceal or cover all their back, and then drawing in their legs, they lie down, in all appearance, as a faggot, and in the part of the camp they intend to rob, crawling slowly in the dark when they think they are unperceived,

* Pronounced Guragé, with the last g hard.—E.

and lying still when there is any noise or movement near them: In case they find themselves discovered, they slip the faggot and run; and whatever part of them you seize escapes your fingers by reason of the grease. If you endeavour to clasp them, however, which is the only way left, the Guragne bends his elbow and strikes you with his knife, and you are mortally wounded, as was the case with Lacca Mariam.

This assassin was no sooner secured and disarmed, than a noose, with a running knot, was slipt round his neck, and his hands tied behind his back, in which manner he was carried before Ras Michael, who sat upon a stool at some distance from his tent, after every part of it had been searched. The fellow at first refused to speak, but, being threatened with torture, answered, in his own language, which I did not understand. He was asked, who had employed him to attempt that assassination? He said, "The rebels;" then named Gusho and Powussen: he then varied, and said the Iteghe employed him. Before he was sent away he contradicted all this, and declared, that Hagos's brother had employed him; and that he was then actually in the camp, with four others, who were determined to murder the Ras and Guebra Mascal, whatever it should cost them.

A search was on this ordered through all the camp, but no stranger found, excepting one of the same nation, who had planted himself and his faggot near the tent of the Abuna; and who being seized, examined, and promised pardon, declared himself absolutely ignorant of any scheme but robbing, for which purpose three of them, he said, had come into the camp together; one of them had stolen two mules the night before, and gone off, and that he was that night intending to take away two of the

Abuna's mules; and he supposed his companion had the same intention with regard to the Ras; but as to murder, or any other plot, he knew nothing of it. Being put slightly to the torture, he persisted in his declaration; and when interrogated, declared, that they all three had come from Guragué with Amha Yasous, to load and unload his baggage, and take care of his beasts: that none of them had been at Gondar before the attempt, except the assassin, who had formerly lived there some years, but whether with Hagos, or any other, he did not know, nor did he ever hear him pronounce the name of Hagos, nor see any stranger, whom he did not know, converse with him: that they all three had lain the last night at the church of Serbraxos: but he further declared, that the person apprehended spoke the Amharic language as well as his own, contrary to what the villain had all along pretended.

This declaration, which I heard from the king's secretary, word for word as it was given, threw all the council into great confusion; the more so, that, being gently talked to, and food given him after his examintion, at night the assassin had again repeated what he before said about Gusho, and that Fasil, too, was accessory to the attempt. And what made this labyrinth of lies still more intricate was, that it was certainly known that Hagos's brother had constantly lived with Coque Abou Barea, in Kuara, from the time Ras Michael had put his brother to death at Gondar. It was intended, therefore, to try the effect of further torture in the morning, to make him confess the truth. His guard, however, having fallen asleep, or gone out of the tent, he was found strangled by the running noose that was left round his neck; nor was any further light ever thrown upon this affair at any time after; but it was generally believed the

attempt had been made at the instigation of some connection of the Iteghe, and there were some who went so far as to name Welleta Israel.

Early in the morning some priests came from Powussen, Ayabdar, and Gusho, to take the most solemn oaths before the Abuna, that they never had the smallest knowledge of what the assassin had laid to their charge; and they took upon themselves sentence of excommunication, which the Abuna then pronounced conditionally, if they had, directly or indirectly, been principal or accessory, or known or been consulted, in any manner whatever, as to the designs of that assassin. Several principal officers of the rebels, moreover, who had left Gondar and gone over to Fasil, and who were there in Gusho's camp, came over to congratulate with Ras Michael upon his escape; so that, for a moment, one would have thought the whole country interested in saving him, whom all were actually in arms at that instant to destroy. What surprised me most of all, probable as the thing might seem to be, not one man in the camp, from the Ras and King downward, seemed to think that this attempt of the Gurague had been in any shape, the plot of the rebels; and yet, in old times, murder by treason must have been very frequent in this kingdom, as appears by their customs preserved to this day; for no person, be their station, connection, or friendship what it will, can offer any one meat or drink without tasting it before them.

Proposals of peace followed this friendly intercourse; but the condition being always that Michael should depart to Tigre, which he thought was but in other terms a proposal to destroy him, these friendly overtures ended in defiance and protestation, "That to him alone was owing the effusion of human blood, and the ruin of his country, which was immediately to follow."

It was the 17th of May, at night, the attempt had been made on the Ras's life; and the 18th was spent in excommunication before the Abuna; and, in the evening, Michael received intelligence, that Ayto Tesfos, from the mountains of Samên and Heraclius and Samuel Mammo, from Walkayt and Tzegade, were both preparing to join the rebels with a considerable force. We were now arrived at the fatal field of Serbraxos, as we had endeavoured to pass it, but in vain; nothing now remained but to try to which side the devil (the father of lies) had been forced to tell the truth, or whether he had yet told it to either. Darion, a principal man of Belessen, and Guigarr of Lasta, joined the Ras's army about noon, bringing with them 1200 men, chiefly horsemen, good troops, and they were joyfully received.

A council was held with all the great officers that evening, and the order of battle fixed upon for next day. Kefla Yasous, with the best of the foot from Tigre, with the king's household troops, the Shoa horse, and the Moors of Ras el Feel, with their libds (in all not amounting to 10,000 men, but the flower of the army), composed the left wing; in the centre of which was the king in person, the heavy-armed black horse before him, and the officers and nobility surrounding him: Guebra Christos, and Kasmati Tesfos of Sire, commanded the centre, in which was Darion and Guigarr's cavalry; for the Lasta men, though of different sides, could never be prevailed upon to fight against one another; so, instead of being with the king against Begemder and Lasta, they were placed in the centre against Gusho and Amhara. The right of the king's army was commanded by Welleta Michael and Billetana Gueta Tecla, opposed to the left wing of the rebels under Kasmati Ayabdar, who had lately received large reinforcements from Gojam,

by means of the Iteghe, who well knew him to be an inveterate enemy to Ras Michael, and one who would never make peace with him.

I have often heard it observed by officers of skill and experience, that nothing is more difficult to describe than a battle, and that as many descriptions as are given of it, they generally disagree, and seem as many different battles. To this I shall add, that I find as great difficulty in giving an idea of the ground on which a battle was fought, which, perhaps, is not the case with professional men; and, though I describe nothing but what I saw, and what my horse passed over, still I very much doubt if I can make myself intelligible to my readers. The hill of Serbraxos was neither very high nor steep, unless on the north and east, where it was almost a precipice. It was not a mountain joined with others, as the bed of a torrent, that ran very rapidly from Belessen south of Mariam-Ohha, divided it from these mountains. The west side of it sloped gently to a large plain, which extended to the brink of the lake Tzana, and upon this our rear was encamped. The S. W. side of this hill was like the former, and about half a mile from it came an elbow of the river Mariam, so called from a church in the plain: on this side of the hill our centre was encamped with the king, Abuna, and the princesses; whilst on the south face (which looked down a valley), was Ras Michael and the van of the army: the hill here was considerably steeper, and I have already said ended with the precipice on the north. Along the bottom of this south face of the hill lay the small stream, called Deg-Ohha, which stood in pools, and was the safest and readiest supply for the army, as being perfectly under command of our muskets, where our horses could water without danger: immediately south from this

ran a valley full half a mile broad, which ended in a large plain about two miles off.

The valley, where Michael and the van first engaged, was formed by the hills of Belessen on the east, and the river Mariam on the west, and near the middle of the valley there was a low and flat-topt hill, not above 30 yards in height, which did not join with the hill of Serbraxos. Between them there was an opening of about 100 yards, through which ran Deg-Ohha, to the ford of the river Mariam, from which you ascended in a direction nearly N. W. up into the plain, which reached to the lake Tzana. On the south end of this hill, as I have said, which might have been about two miles in length, the banks of the Mariam are very high, and the river stands in large deep pools, with banks of sand between them. Where this hill ends to the right is another ford of the river Mariam, where a deep and narrow sandy road goes winding up the banks in a direction N. W. like the former, and leads to the same plain bordering on the lake Tzana; so that the plain of the valley where the Mariam runs, which is bordered by the foot of the mountains of Belessen, and continues along the plain south to Tangouri, is near 200 feet lower than the plain that extends on the side of the lake Tzana. Nor is there a convenient access from the plain to the valley, at least that I saw, by reason of the height and steepness of the banks of the Mariam, excepting these two already mentioned; one between the extremity of the long even hill, and slope of the mountain on the north, and the other on the south, through the winding sandy road up the steep banks of the river, by the south end of that low hill, as I have already said. At these two places are the two fords of the river, which continue passable even in the rainy season, and the water at that time stands in pools below it, till several miles further it

joins the Zingetch Gomara, a larger stream than itself, whose banks are low, and where the stream is fordable also; but the banks of the river Mariam continue steep, and run in a southern direction. In this valley, at the south end of this hill, near the ford, was the engagement between Michael with the van, and the Begemder troops, on the 16th; at the ford on the north end of this hill, in the same valley, was the fight between the light troops and Kasmati Ayabdar, and the king in person, the very same day; so that the valley was perfectly known by the enemy, and as they had few or no musketry, was wisely considered as not fit ground for their purposes, being narrow, and commanded by hills everywhere.

On the 19th of May, word was brought that the whole rebel army was in motion; and before eight o'clock (reckoned in Abyssinia an early hour for such business), a great cloud of dust was seen rising on the right of the rebels towards Korreva, and this was the moment the Begemder troops got on horseback in the dusty plain; soon after we heard their kettle-drums, and about nine o'clock we saw the whole troops of Begemder appear, drawn up at such a distance in the plain, above the road up the steep bank of the Mariam, as to leave great room for us to form with the road on our left, and a little on our rear; Michael easily divined Powussen's intention, which was to beat us back by a superior force of horse, and then making a number of troops glide below unseen, along the river in the valley, take possession of the round hill, at the north ford of Mariam, and cut off our retreat to our camp at Serbraxos; the Ras immediately dispatched some single horsemen to take a view of the enemy more nearly, and report what their numbers were, and where Gusho and Ayabdar were posted; for we could distinguish the colour of the horses, and all

the movements of the Begemder troops, not being much above three miles distance, yet we did not know whether they were alone, or whether one or more of the other generals were with them: we saw, indeed, Powussen's standards, but they were so weather-beaten and faded, that we could not distinguish their real colours, which were blue and yellow.

The king's whole army was descending into the valley, and passing over the ford of the Mariam, to the plain above where Kefla Yasous was riding to and fro with great earnestness, encouraging his troops. In a very short time the left was formed; the Ras having given all his orders, and taken to himself the charge of the camp and the reserve, sat down, as was usual, to play at drafts with the black servants. The army was now all in the plain, when the scouts arrived, and brought word that Gusho and Ayabdar had both taken their ground, not directly in a straight line from Powussen, square with the lake, but as it were diagonally declining more to the southward, so that the most advanced, or nearest to us, were the troops of Begemder; and this was probably done, in order that, our backs being more turned to the lake, we might be easier cut off from our camp, and surrounded in the plain, between their army and the Tzana, if Powussen was so fortunate as to beat the king and the left; but this disposition of these troops was out of our sight, being down nearer the lake. Nor is it to be understood that I mean here to give any account of their movements, or of any other, unless those of the left wing under the king, where I was myself engaged.

Several spies came into Ras Michael at this time, and they, and the horsemen that had been sent on the service, all agreed, that in the centre of the Begemder horse a large red standard was displayed, with a number of kettle-drums beating before it, which the Ras

no sooner heard, than giving his draft-board a kick with his foot, he overturned the whole game, and afforded, at least, a bad omen of the future engagement. He then called for Kefla Yasous, and Guebra Mascal, and having conferred with them both, he detached Guebra Mascal, with five hundred musketeers, to take possession of the hill in the valley below, and coast along the left flank of our left without appearing in sight.

The day had been exceeding close, seemed to threaten violent thunder, and we were now come so near as to see distinctly the large red standard, which being pointed out to the king, he said, smiling, with a very cheerful countenance, "Aye, aye; now we shall soon see what miracle king Theodorus will work." The clouds had been gathering ever since we went down the hill, and some big drops of rain had fallen. The soldiers were now covering their lighted matches, for fear of more, when first a most violent storm of thunder, lightning, and rain began, then a tempest of rain and wind, and last a dead calm, with such a heavy shower that I scarce ever saw the like even in the rainy season.

Had I been commander of the Begemder troops that day, this shower should have been the signal of charging; for all the king's fire-arms were useless, and the matches wet; but the Begemder horse seemed most uneasy under the fall of rain; they began to be unmanageable, and turn tail to the wind, which now arose, and was directly in their faces, and, in a few minutes, they wheeled about, and retired to their camp. The king halted on the ground where he was, ordered the kettle-drums to beat, and the trumpets to sound; and, having continued half an hour till the heavy shower began, he fell back, as did the whole army, and retired to the camp. When he got up the

hill, and passed the brow where Ras Michael was sitting with some slaves, who held up a piece of sail-cloth over his head to keep off the rain, the servants raised the Ras upon his feet; without any previous salutation, he then asked the king what he had done with king Theodorus? and was answered, "Begemder brought him, and Begemder took him away; we saw nothing but his flag." "Lasta carried his flag," says one of the nobility. "He is a peaceable prince," says the king; "yet he begins with fighting; but he will make amends afterwards, if he governs this country in peace a thousand years." "If he does that," says the Ras, "Powussen is to die at the next battle, for the thousand years peace will never begin, as long as he is alive."

CHAP. VII.

King offers Battle to the Rebels in the Plain—Description of the Second Battle of Serbraxos—Rash Conduct, and narrow escape of the King—Both Armies keep the Ground.

THE whole evening of the 19th of May was spent in festivity and joy; a prophet from some part in Dembea had foretold the defeat of king Theodorus, and what was much more interesting, two large droves of cattle, the one from Belessen, near Mariam-Ollila, the other from Dembea, were driven that day into the camp. Ras Michael, who knew the value of to-morrow, spared nothing that might refresh the troops this day. The king and he, Ozoro Esther, and Ozoro Altash, Kefla Yasous, and the Abuna himself, gave each of them entertainments to the principal officers of the army, and all those who were likely to bear the burden of the ensuing conflict. The soldiers were in great spirits; but it was now very generally known that the officers were mostly disaffected, engaged in private treaties, and in daily expectation of peace.

A very short council was held at the king's tent; all that could be resolved upon had been already fixed the day before, and little had happened since to occa-

sion any alteration. All the young nobility were, as usual, at Ozoro Esther's. It was with infinite pity I heard them thoughtlessly praying for a warm and fair day to-morrow, the evening of which many of them were never to see.

Besides the stores that Ozoro Esther always was provided with, the king had sent her two live cattle, wine, brandy, and hydromel; and what was a very unusual condescension, the Ras, immediately after council, came into the tent, and brought with him a fresh supply. He was very gracious and affable, said a number of kind things to everybody, and asked me particularly how we drank in England?

I explained to him as well as I could the nature of our toasts, and drinking to the health of our mistresses by their names in bumpers; that our soldiers' toasts on such a night as that, if the general honoured them, as he did us now, with his company, would be "A fair morning, and speedy sight of our enemy." He comprehended it all very easily, and when I saw he did so, I asked if I should give my toast? and he, and all the company, joining in a loud cry of approbation, I filled a horn with wine, and standing up, for he had forced us all to be seated, I drank, "Long life to the king; health, happiness, and victory to you, sir, and a speedy sight of king Theodorus." A violent shout of applause followed. He himself (the soberest of men) would drink his horn full, which he did, with many interruptions from immoderate fits of laughter; the horn went quickly round, and I ventured to prophecy, that, in the thousand years he is to reign, Theodorus will never again be so cheerfully toasted.

The Ras then turning to me said, "I wish I had 5000 of your countrymen, Yagoube, to morrow, such as you are, or such as you have described them." I answer

ed, "Would you had one thousand, and I had twenty lives staked upon the issue." Ayto Engedan upon this got up, and passing accross the tent in a very graceful manner, kissed the Ras's hand, saying, "Do not make us think you undervalue, or distrust your children, by forming such a wish: Yagoube is one of us, he is our brother, and he shall see and judge to-morrow, if we, your own sons, are not able to fight your battle without the aid of any foreigners." Tears, on this, came into the old man's eyes, who took Engedan in his arms, and kissed him; then recommending to us not to sit up late, he withdrew. A great deal of buffoonery followed about toasts; and soon after arrived two officers from the king, desiring to know what was the reason of that violent outcry, by which he meant the shout when we drank the toast. Ozoro Esther answered, "We were all turned traitors, and were drinking the health of king Theodorus." But it was afterwards thought proper to explain the whole matter before the messengers went back, and make them drink the toast also.

Tecla Mariam had not spoken much, her father having sent for her at that time to the king. Before she departed, I begged Ozoro Esther to apologize for me, that I had absented myself, and had not waited upon her in the morning. I intreated her to continue her kind partiality to me the next day, and to judge for ever of the esteem I had for her by my then behaviour. She promised to do so with the utmost complacency and sweetness, and departed.

Soon after this, a servant arrived from Ras Michael, with a magnificent saddle and bridle as a present to Engedan. This man told us that a messenger had come from Waragna Fasil, desiring a place might be marked out for him to encamp, for he was to join the

king early in the morning; but nobody gave any credit to this, nor did he, as far as I ever heard, advance a foot nearer the camp. The messenger commanded us all, moreover, to go to bed, which we immediately complied with. I only went to the king's tent, where the company was dispersing, and kissed his hand, after which I retired. In my way home to my tent, I saw a faggot lying in the way, when the story of the Gurague came presently into my mind. I ordered some soldiers to separate it with their lances; but it had been brought for fuel, at least no Gurague was there.

I was no sooner laid upon my bed, than I fell into a profound sleep, which continued uninterrupted till five o'clock in the morning of the 20th. I had spared myself industriously in last night's carousal, for fear of contributing to a relapse into despondency in the morning; but I found all within serene and composed as it should be, and entirely resigned to what was decreed; I was perfectly satisfied, that the advancing or retarding the day of my death was not in the power of the army of Begemder. I then visited all the horses and the black soldiers, and ordered two or three of them, who were not perfectly recovered from their hurts, to stay in the camp. I afterwards went to the king's tent, who was not yet up; and the very instant after, the Ras's first drum beat, and the king rose; soon after which, the second drum was heard for the soldiers to go to breakfast. I went into the king's tent to kiss his hand, and receive his orders. He told me they were speedily then going to breakfast within, to which meal I was engaged at Ozoro Esther's. He answered, "Make haste then, for I am resolved to be on the field before king Theodorus to-day. I am his senior, and should shew him an example." He seemed more than ordinary gay and in spirits.

I finished my breakfast in a few minutes, and took a grateful, but cheerful leave of Ozoro Esther, and received many acknowledgments, and kind expressions, both from her and Tecla Mariam, who did not fail to be there according to appointment. The day was clear, the sun warm, and the army descended into the plain with great alacrity, in the same order as the day before. Guebra Mascal, with his musketeers, took possession of the long hill in the valley, and coasted the left flank of our left wing, the river Mariam and its high banks being only between us. The king took his post, with the winding road aforementioned (up the steep banks of the Mariam), close on his left. Guebra Mascal having come to the south end of the hill below, marched briskly up the road, and then advanced about 200 yards, making his men lie down at the brink of the hill next the plain, among bent grass, and thin tall shrubs like Spanish broom, so as to be perfectly out of sight; his line was at right angles with our front, so that his fire must enfilade the whole front of our line.

If not very useful, yet it may, however, be thought curious to know the disposition of a barbarous army ready to engage in a pitched battle as this was. Kefla Yasous, who commanded the left-wing under the king, placed his cavalry in a line to the opening of the road down into the valley; between every two muskets were men armed with lances and shields; then, at a particular distance, close before this line of horse, was a body of lances, and muskets, or sometimes either of them, in several lines, or, as they appeared, a round body of soldiers, standing together without any order at all; then another line of horse, with men between alternately as before; then another round corps of lances and muskets, advanced just before the line of horse, and so on to the end of the division.

I know nothing of the disposition of the rest of the army, nor the ground they were engaged on; that where we stood was as perfect a plain as that commonly chosen to run races upon, and so I believe was the rest, only sloping more to the lake Tzana.

The king's infantry was drawn up in one line, having a musketeer between every two men, with lances and shields. Immediately in the centre was the black horse, and the Moors of Ras el Feel, with their libds, disposed on each of their flanks. Immediately behind these was the king in person, with a large body of young nobility and great officers of state, about him. On the right and left flank of the line, a little in the rear, were all the rest of the king's horse, divided into two large bodies. Guebra Mascal hid in the bank on our left at right angles with the line, enfilading, as I have already said, the whole line of our infantry; this will be easily understood by consulting the plan, where H H, G G, F, and I, represent the disposition that I have now described.

It was full half an hour after the king had formed, before the army of Begemder made any motion. The Ras first saw them from the hill, and made a signal, by beating his drums, and blowing his trumpets; this was immediately answered by all the drums and trumpets of the left wing; and for the space of a minute, a thick cloud of dust (like the smoke of a large city on fire) appeared on the side of Korreva, occasioned, as the day before, by the Begemder troops mounting on horseback; the ground where they were encamped being trodden into powder, by such a number of men and horse passing over it so often, and now raised by the motion of the horses feet, was whirled round by a very moderate breeze, that blew steadily; it every minute increased in darkness, and assumed various shapes and forms, of towers, castles,

and battlements, as fancy suggested. In the middle of this great cloud we began to perceive indistinctly part of the horsemen, then a much greater number, and the figure of the horses more accurately defined, which came moving majestically upon us, sometimes partially seen, at other times concealed by being wrapt up in clouds and darkness; the whole made a most extraordinary, but truly picturesque, appearance.

I was so struck with this, that I could not help saying to Billetana Gueta Ammonios, who commanded the horse under me, "Is not that a glorious sight, Ammonios! who, that was a king, would not be fond of war?" "David, however, curses those that delight in war," says Ammonios. "Therefore," replied I, "there must be pleasure in it, or else nobody would fall into a sin that was disagreeable in itself, and, at the same time, forbidden by God." "Well, well," replied Ammonios, "this is not a time for argument; see what a glorious spectacle we shall all be before sunset."

At this time Powussen's whole army was distinctly seen; they came riding backwards and forwards with great violence, more as if they were diverting themselves, than advancing to attack an enemy, of our consequence, that was waiting them. They seemed like two wings, and a main body, each nearly equal in numbers, as far as I could guess, and are described in the plan by the letters L L; but they were sometimes all in one crowd together, and in such perpetual motion, that it was impossible to ascertain their precise form.

Four men, upon unruly, high-mettled, or, at least, ill-broke horses, rode galloping a small space before, conversing together, as if making their observations upon us: they were now arrived at about six hundred yards distance, but it was not a time to make accurate

calculation; they then made a stop, and began extending the left of their line to the westward, as described by M M. I suppose, too, their horses needed to breathe a little, after they had so imprudently blown them to no purpose.

In the middle of their cavalry, or rather a little more towards their right, than opposite to the place where the king was, a large red flag was seen to rise, and was saluted by the drums and trumpets of their whole army. An accident happened at this moment, which endangered the discovery of the hidden part of our disposition, and which would thereby have destroyed the sanguine hopes we had of victory, and endangered the safety of the whole army. Upon displaying the red flag, two muskets were fired from the post in the face of the hill where Guebra Mascal lay in ambush. Luckily, at that very instant, all the king's drums beat, and trumpets sounded, a kind of mock alarm (such as the posture-masters and mountebanks use), in ridicule of king Theodorus, and his red flag then flying before us.

Immediately upon this, as on a signal for battle, the whole army of Begemder set out full gallop, to charge us at N N, and a long hundred yards before they joined, they received, through the very depth of their squadron, a close well-directed fire from the whole musketry of Guebra Mascal, and from the king's line an instant after, which put them into the utmost confusion; so that they in part came reeling down upon our line, half wheeled about to the left, as men that had lost their way, with their right, that is, their naked sides exposed as they turned, their shields being on their left. The fire from Guebra Mascal was the signal for our line to charge, and the heavy-armed horsemen with their pikes broke through them with little resistance; the line in the meanwhile, with horse

and foot, closed with them, after the muskets had given them their fire, and then staid behind to recharge. Part of their left did not engage at all, but wheeled about, and fled southward over the plain.

While their army was thus separated into two divisions, both in great confusion, the king, with his reserve, fell furiously upon them; and being followed by all the rest of the horse, they pushed the right division (where Powussen was in person), along the plain, but these retired, fighting very obstinately, and often rallying. Kefla Yasous saw the great danger to which the king would quickly be exposed by pursuing the troops of Begemder so far a distance from his foot, and that they would soon turn upon and overpower him with numbers, and then surround him. He, therefore, with great presence of mind, provided for his retreat. He drew up the heavy armed horse, which could not gallop, the Moors of Ras el Feel, and the foot which were left behind, and which had now recharged their fire-locks before the narrow road, and ordered Gubo Mascal to resume his station. He then twice, with great earnestness, cried in a loud voice to the soldiers "The king's safety depends upon you; stand firm, or all is lost." After which, he galloped, with a small body of horse, to join the king, closely engaged at a considerable distance: The foot that had pursued, or were scattered, now came in by tens and twelves, and joined the heavy-armed horse, so that we began again to shew a very good countenance. Among these, a common soldier of the king's household, busied in the vile practice of mangling and spoiling the dead, found the red colours of king Theodorus lying upon the field, which he delivered me, upon promise of a reward, and which I gave a servant of my own to keep till after the engagement.

At this instant Guebra Mascal came up from below the bank, leaping and flourishing his gun about his head, and crying, just before my horse, "Now, Yagoube, stand firm, if you are a man." "Look at me, you drunken slave," said I, "armed, or unarmmed, and say, it is not a boast if I count myself at all times a better man than you. Away to your hiding-hole again, and for your life appear within my reach. Away! you are not now, as the other day, before the king." The man cried out in a transport of impatience, "By C—d, you don't know what I mean; but here they all come, stand firm if you are men;" and, saying this, he ran nimbly off, and hid himself below the bank, with his lighted match in one hand, and all ready.

It is proper, for connection's sake, though I did not myself see it, to relate what had happened to the king, who had pursued the Begemder horse to a very considerable distance, and was then at S S in the plan, when the whole army of the rebels that had not engaged, observing the resistance made by Powussen, and part of the division which they had left, turned suddenly back from their flight, and at R R nearly surrounded the king and his cavalry, whom they had now driven to the very edge of the steepest part of the bank of the Mariam. Kefla Yasous's arrival, indeed, and his exerting himself to the utmost, fighting with his own hand like any common soldier, had brought some relief; yet, as fresh horse came in, there can be little doubt, at the end, that the king must have been either slain or taken prisoner, if Sertza Denghel, a young man of Amhara, a relation of Gusho, and who had a small post in the palace, had not dismounted, and offered to lead the king's horse down the steepest of the banks into the river. To this, however, he received an absolute refusal. "I shall die here this

day," says the king, "but, while I have a man left, will never turn my back upon the rebels." Sertza Denghel hearing this vain discourse, and seeing no time was to be lost, took hold of the bridle by force, at T, and happily led the horse along one of the sheep-paths, slanting down the declivity of the bank. The king, having in vain threatened displeasure, and even death, with the butt-end of his lance, in despair, struck Sertza Denghel in the mouth, and beat out all his fore-teeth. A bank of gravel, like a bridge, separated two deep pools, in the river Mariam, over which the king escaped, though with difficulty, the ground being foul with quick-sand.

All the foot that had remained about the king ran down the bank, where the Begemder horse could not pursue them, and joined him in the valley, where he made the best of his way towards the south side of the long low hill, by the winding road, on the side of which, and just above him, was placed Guebra Mascal. Ras Michael, who saw the dangerous situation and escape of the king, and who had kept Ayto Engedan near for some such purposes, dispatched him with a considerable body of horse, along the low hill, ordering him immediately to join the king, and cover his retreat; he likewise detached a considerable body of musketeers, and mounted, for the greater speed, upon mules, who were directed to take post upon the south end of the round hill, below the winding road, while another party possessed themselves of some rocky ground on the south side of the valley. This command was as soon executed as given. Ayto Engedan joined the king, who had lost all his kettle-drums but one, now beating before him, and upon his arrival at the entrance of the valley, the king, at V, turned his face to the enemy, having the musketry, at X and Y, newly arrived from the camp on his right and left.

Kefla Yasous was immediately acquainted with the king's escape; and, knowing the consequence of protracting time, renewed the engagement with so much vigour, that he pushed the horse of Begemder to some small distance back into the plain. Powussen, whose only view was to take the king prisoner, and wrest the possession of his person, and with that his authority, from Ras Michael, was much disconcerted at the unexpected way by which the king escaped; he after this halted a little for council, then divided his troops, with one part of which he resolved to go down the winding road, and with the other to pass at the junction of the rivers, and enter the valley in that direction, in order to overtake the king, and intercept him in his way to the camp, in case any thing obstructed his passing the winding road. Kefla Yasous took advantage of this movement, and with his horse made his way to join the heavy-armed troops, and those who had joined the line, standing closely and firmly where they were stationed.

The first person that appeared was Kefla Yasous himself, and the horse with him, stretching out his hand (his face being all besmeared with blood, for he was wounded in his forehead); he cried as loud as he could, "Stand firm, the king is safe in the valley." He had scarce faced about, and joined the line, when the enemy approached at a brisk gallop. The Begemder horse were closer than usual, and deeper than the front was broad, they resembled therefore an oblong square, if they resembled any thing; but the truth is, they were all in disorder, and their figure, never regular, changed every moment; the right of their front (which was not equal to ours) was finally placed against the road, being close by Guebra Mascal's post, whose men were much increased in number; they received the discharge of his whole mus-

ketry in two vollies, so near that I scarce believe there was one shot that did not take place on man or horse. A great cry from the bank at the same time added to their panic, which was answered by the king's troops, who immediately charged them as before, as they wheeled half round to the left. They were pursued, for a small distance, by some of the troops that had not engaged in the morning, and it was easy to perceive their disorder was real, and that they were not likely to rally. By this last discharge, Powussen was slightly wounded, and his men were plainly seen hurrying him off the field. In the very instant the rebels turned their backs, Kefla Yasous ordered all the troops, horse and foot, to file off down the narrow road into the valley, behind the heavy-armed horse, who kept their ground before the road, and there to join the king.

For my part, I thought the affair was over, when, last of all, we, too, with our heavy horses, descended the road, where we found Guebra Mascal (whose activity was above all praise) drawn up on our right along the foot of the bank (with a large pool of water in his front), flanking the valley; the king drawn up in the narrowest part of it, and just engaged with the troops of Lasta and Begemder, that had gone round by the junction of the rivers. These had lost, as we afterwards heard, much time in giving their horses water. They were, however, the more refreshed when they did come, and though they had received a fire from the troops on the round hill, and from those posted on the rocky ground, on the other side of the valley, they had beat the king and Engedan back, and wounded him in the thigh.

At this time the Koccob horse, and Yasine, with his Moors (who had the charge of the road above till all the troops were gone) arrived, being, as it were, shut out from the army, who were engaged at the

other side of the hill. Kefla Yasous, after descending through the winding road into the valley, ordered Guebra Mascal to pass the pool, and stand at the bottom of the winding road, for fear the enemy should enter at the valley on the king's right, where the river ran, and so cut us off from our camp.

This space he was then occupying, when Yasine, first, and afterwards, our black horse, arrived. He had, it seems, cried out to me before from the side of the pool, but I had not then heard him. He now, however, repeated, "Where are you going, Yagoube?" "To die," said I, surlily; "it is the business of the day." He then added, "Kefla Yasous has crossed over behind Basha Hezekias, and fallen into the king's rear." "You know well," said I, "our post is in his front." "Then follow me," cried Mascal, "for, by God, I say you shall not take one step to-day, but I will go five before you." So saying, he advanced very hastily, and when he saw the Begemder colours retreating before the king, he poured in a volley, which, though at a considerable distance, turned all to a perfect flight.

We entered upon the smoke, just before the Shoa horse, with no loss, and very little resistance, and came just into the place which we occupied in the morning. Though the flight of the rebels was apparently real, Kefla Yasous would not suffer a pursuit into the plain, but advancing singly before us, began to form immediately; the musketry were planted on each side of the valley, as far up the hill as to be out of reach of the horse, and the rest of the infantry in the plain; Basha Hezekias was on the round hill just behind the centre, where the king had placed himself, and Guebra Mascal nearly where he stood before.

The army now made an appearance of a large section of an amphitheatre. I observed the king had pulled off the diadem, or white fillet he wears for

distinction, and was very intent upon renewing the engagement: the Begemder troops were forming, with great alertness, about half a mile below, being reinforced from time to time. The king ordered his drums to beat, and his trumpets to sound, to inform the enemy he was ready; but they did not answer, or advance: soon after (it being near three o'clock) the weather became overcast and cold, on which the troops of Begemder beat a retreat; the king, very soon after, did the same, and returned to the camp without further molestation; only that coming near a rock which projected into the valley (not far distant from the camp), a multitude of peasants, belonging to Mariam-Ohho, threw down a shower of stones from their hands and slings, which hurt several. The king ordered them to be fired at, though they were at a great distance off, and passed on: but Guebra Mascal, commanding about fifty men to run briskly up the hill, on each side of the rock, gave them two discharges at a less distance, which killed or wounded many, and made the rest disappear in a moment.

I doubt that my reader will be more than sufficiently tired with the detail of this second battle of Serbraxos; but, as it was a very remarkable incident in my life, I could not omit it as far as I saw it myself, and suppressing any one part of it would have involved the rest in confusion, with which, I fear, it may be still too justly charged. I therefore shall only say for connection's sake, that Gusho and Guebra Christos, in the centre, were but partially engaged, and Kasmati Tesfos of Sire, second commander for the king, in that division, wounded, and taken prisoner. Guebra Christos, the king's uncle, was slain (as it was believed) by a shot of his own men; few other lives of note were lost on either side, in that division. The king's troops fell back under the hill of Serbraxos,

where Michael was, and, though followed by Gusho, were no further attacked by him. But on the right, Billetana Gueta Tecla, and Welleta Michael, after a very obstinate and bloody engagement, were beaten by Kasmati Ayabdar, and forced across the river Mogetch, where, having rallied and posted themselves strongly, it was not thought proper to attempt to force them; and they all joined the camp soon after the king, but with very great loss.

This battle, though it was rather a victory than a defeat, had, however, upon the king's affairs, all the bad consequences of the latter, nor was there any thinking man who had confidence in them from that day forward. Near 3000 men perished on the king's side, a great proportion of whom was of the left wing, which he commanded; near 180 young men, of the greatest hopes and noblest families in the kingdom, were among that number; Guebra Christos was, in all respects, a truly national loss. Kefla Yasous was twice wounded, but not dangerously, besides a multitude of others of the first rank, among whom was Ayto Engedan, who, by proper care, soon recovered also, but in the mean time was sent to Gondar, to his cousin Ayto Confu. On our side, too, a son of Lika Netcho, and a son of Nebrit Tecla, were both slain.—Providence seemed now to have begun to require satisfaction for the blood of the late King Joas, in the shedding of which these two were particularly concerned. Among the slain were our friends the Baharnagash and his son, who died valiantly fighting before the king, at the time he escaped down the bank into the valley.

But what served as comfort to the king, was the still heavier loss sustained by the enemy, who, by their own accounts that day, lost above 9000 men, 7000 of whom were from the troops of Begemder and

Lasta, with which the king was engaged. For my own part, I cannot believe, but that both these accounts are much exaggerated; the great proportion that died of those that were wounded must have greatly swelled the loss of the rebels, because most gun-shot wounds, especially if bones are broken, mortify, and prove mortal. Among the slain on the part of Begemder, were two chiefs of Lasta, and two relations of Powussen (a brother-in-law and his son); they were both shot, bearing the banner of King Theodorus. The unworthy Confu, brother to Guebra Mehedin, and nephew to the Iteghe, whom I have often mentioned, had escaped, indeed, from Kasmati Ayabdar, who had given orders to confine him, to die a rebel this day among the troops of Begemder.

The king being washed and dressed, and having dined, received a compliment from Ras Michael, who sent him a present of fruit, and a thousand ounces of gold. Then began the filthiest of all ceremonies that ever disgraced any nation styling themselves Christians; a ceremony that cannot be put in terms sufficiently decent for modest ears, without adopting the chaste language of Scripture, which, when necessity obliges it to treat of gross subjects, always makes choice of the least offensive language.

All those, whether women or men, who have fiefs of the crown, are obliged to furnish certain numbers of horse and foot. The women were seldom obliged to personal attendance, till Ras Michael made it a rule, in order to compose a court or company for Ozoro Esther. At the end of a day of battle each chief is obliged to sit at the door of his tent, and each of his followers, who has slain a man, presents himself in his turn, armed as in fight, with the bloody foreskin of the man whom he has slain, hanging upon the wrist of his right hand. In this, too, he holds his lance, bran-

dishing it over his master, or mistress, as if he intended to strike; and repeating, in a seeming rage, a rant of nonsense, which admits of no variation—"I am John the son of George, the son of William, the son of Thomas; I am the rider upon the brown horse; I saved your father's life at such a battle; where would you have been if I had not fought for you to-day? you gave me no encouragement, no cloaths, nor money; you do not deserve such a servant as I;" and with that he throws his bloody spoils upon the ground before his superior. Another comes afterwards, in his turn, and does the same; and, if he has killed more than one man, so many more times he returns, always repeating the same nonsense, with the same gestures. I believe there was a heap of above 400 that day, before Ozoro Esther; and it was monstrous to see the young and beautiful Tecla Mariam sitting upon a stool presiding at so filthy a ceremony; nor was she without surprise, such is the force of custom, that no compliment of that kind was paid on my part; and still more so, that I could not be even present at so horrid and bloody an exhibition.

The superiors appear at this time with their heads covered, as before their vassals; their mouth, too, is hid, and nothing is seen but their eyes: this does not proceed from modesty, but is a token of superiority, of which, covering or uncovering the head is a very special demonstration. After this ceremony is over, each man takes his bloody conquest, and retires to prepare it in the same manner the Indians do their scalps. To conclude this beastly account, the whole army, on their return to Gondar, on a particular day of review, throws them before the king, and leaves them at the gate of the palace. It is in search of these, and the unburied bodies of criminals, that the

hyænas come in such number to the streets, where it is dangerous, even when armed, to walk after it is dark.

This inhuman ceremony being over, also the care of the wounded, which indeed precedes every thing, the king received all those of the nobility who had distinguished themselves that day; the tent was crowded, and he was in great spirits at the slaughter that had been made, which unbecoming pleasure he never could disguise. He mentioned the death of his uncle Guebra Christos with a degree of cheerfulness, presuming, that when such a man died on his side, many of that rank and merit must have fallen on the other. Villages, appointments, and promotions, gold, promises, and presents of every kind, had been liberally bestowed upon those who had presented themselves, and who had merited reward that day by their behaviour. The king had been furnished with means from the Ras, and according to his natural inclination (especially towards soldiers) he had bestowed them liberally, and I believe impartially. Guebra Mascal had not appeared; he was waiting upon his uncle Ras Michael, looking after his own interest, to which no Abyssinian is blind, and exposing those bloody spoils, which I have just mentioned, to the Ras, his uncle and general.

I had been absent from another motive, attendance on my friend Engedan, to whose tent I had removed my bed, as he complained of great pain in his wound; and I had likewise obtained leave of the Ras to shift my tent near that of his, and leave the care of the king's horse to Laeca Mariam, an old slave and confidential servant of the king.

As these men were the king's menial servants in his palace, a number of them (about a fourth) staid at Gondar with the horses, and few more than 100 to 120 could now be mustered, from about 200 or 204

which they at first were: the arranging of this, attendance upon Ayto Engedan, and several delays in getting access to the Ras, who had all his troops of Tigre round him, made it past eight o'clock in the evening before I could see the king after he entered the camp; he had many times sent in search of Sertza Denghel, but no such person could be found: he had been seen bravely fighting by Engedan's side in the entrance of the valley, when that young nobleman was wounded, and he had retired with him from the field, but nobody could give any account of him; and the king, by his repeated inquiries after him, shewed more anxiety, from the supposition he was lost, than he had done for Guebra Christos his uncle, or all the men that had fallen that day. I had seen him in Ayto Engedan's tent, sitting behind his bed, in the darkest place of it; both his lips, nose, and chin, were violently cut, his whole fore-teeth beat out, and both his cheeks greatly swelled. I had given him what relief I could, nor was there any thing dangerous in his wounds; but the affront of receiving the blow from the king, when he was doing a most meritorious act of duty (the saving him from death or the hands of the rebels), had made such an impression upon a noble mind, that as soon as he arrived in Engedan's tent, he had ordered his hair to be cut off, put a white cap, or monk's cowl, upon his head, and by a vow dedicated himself to a monastic life. In vain the king flattered, rewarded, and threatened him afterwards, and went so far as to make the Abuna menace him with excommunication if he persisted in his resolution any longer. After this I carried him, as we shall see, by the king's desire, to Gusho, in his camp, and interested him also to persuade Sertza Denghel to renounce his rash vow: no consideration could, however, prevail; for, like a private monk, he lived at home in the village which be-

longed to him in patrimony; and, though he often came to court, never slept or ate in the palace, the excuse being, when desired to stay dinner, that he had *no teeth.* He constantly slept at my house, sometimes cheerful, but very seldom so. He was a young man of excellent understanding, and particularly turned to the study of religion; he was well read in all the books of his own country, and very desirous of being instructed in ours; he had the very worst opinion of his own priests, and his principal desire (if it had been possible) was to go with me to die, and to be buried in Jerusalem.

CHAP. VIII.

King rewards his Officers—The Author again persecuted by Guebra Mascal—Great Displeasure of the King—The Author and Guebra Mascal are reconciled and rewarded—Third battle of Serbraxos.

After the engagement, as every body had access to the king's presence, I did not choose to force my way through the crowd, but went round through the more private entry, by the bed-chamber, when I placed myself behind the king's chair. As soon as he saw me, he said, with great benignity, "I have not inquired nor sent for you, because I knew you would be necessarily busied among those of your friends, who have been wounded to-day; you are yourself, besides, hurt: how are you?" I answered, "That I was not hurt today; but, though often in danger, had escaped without any other harm than excessive fatigue, occasioned by heat and the weight of my coat of mail, and that one of my horses was killed under Ammonios."

I then took the red colours from the servant behind me; and going to the carpet spread before the king, laid them at his feet, saying, "So may all your majesty's enemies fall, as this arch rebel (the bearer of this) has fallen to-day;" a great murmur was immediately raised upon seeing these colours, and the king cried out with the utmost impatience, "Has he fallen

into your hands, Yagoube? who was he, where did you meet him, or where did you slay him?" "Sir," said I, "it was not my fortune to meet him to-day, nor did I slay him. I am no king-killer; it is a sin, I thank God, from which my ancestors are all free; yet, had Providence thrown in my way a king like this, I believe I might have overcome my scruples. He was killed, as I suppose, by a shot of Guebra Mascal, on the flank of our line; a soldier picked up the colours on the field, and brought them to me in hopes of reward, while you was engaged with the troops of Begemder, near the bank; but the merit of his death is with Guebra Mascal. I do him this justice, the rather because he is the only man in your majesty's army who bears me ill-will, or has been my constant enemy, for what reason I know not; but God forbid, that on this, or any personal account, I should not bear witness to the truth: this day, my fortune has been to be near him during the whole of it, and I say it from certain inspection, that to the bravery and activity of Guebra Mascal every man in your left wing owes his life or liberty."—"He is a shame and disgrace to his family," says the king's secretary, who was standing by him, "if after this he can be your enemy."—"It must be a mistake," says the king's priest, Kees Hatze; "for this should atone for it, though Yagoube had slain his brother."

While this conversation was going on, an extraordinary bustle was observed in the crowd, and this unquiet genius pushing through it with great violence, his goat's skin upon his shoulders, and covered with dust and sweat, in the same manner he came from the field; he had heard I was gone to the king's tent with the red flag, and not doubting I was to complain of him, or praise myself at his expence, had directly followed me, without giving himself time to make the

least inquiry. He threw himself suddenly, with his face to the ground, before the throne, and rising as quickly, and in violent agitation, he said to the king, or rather bellowed, very indecently, "It is a lie Yagoube is telling; he does not say the truth; I meant him no harm, but good, to-day, and he did not understand my language. I don't say Yagoube is not as good a man as any of us, but it is a lie he has been telling now, and I will prove it."

A general silence followed this wild rhapsody; the king was surprised, and very gravely said, "I am sorry, for your sake, if it is a lie; for my part, I was rash enough to believe it was true." Guebra Mascal was still going to make bad worse, by some absurd reply, when the secretary, and one or two of his friends, hauled him out behind the throne to one of the apartments within, not without some resistance, every one supposing, and many saying, he was drunk; the king was silent, but appeared exceedingly displeased; when I fell upon the ground before him (a form of asking leave to speak upon a particular subject), and rising, said, "Sir, with great submission, it is not, I apprehend, true, that Guebra Mascal is drunk, as some have rashly said now in your presence; we have all ate and drank, and changed our clothing since the battle; but this man, who has been on foot since five in the morning, and engaged all day, has not, I believe, ate or drank as yet; certainly he has not washed himself, or changed his habit, but has been taking care of his wounded men, and has presented himself now as he came from the field, under the unjust suspicion I was doing him wrong." I then repeated what had happened at the bank when the king was pursuing the troops of Begemder. "Now I understand him," says the king, "but still he is wrong, and this is not the first instance I have seen, when there was no such mistake."

At this time a messenger came to call me from within.

The king divined the reason of sending, and said, "No, he shall not go to Guebra Mascal; I will not suffer this. Go," says he to one of his servants that stood near him, "desire the Ras to call Guebra Mascal, and ask him what this brutality means? I have seen two instances of his misbehaviour already, and wish not to be provoked by a third." At this instant came Kefla Yasous, with his left hand bound up, and a broad leaf, like that of a plane, upon his forehead. After the usual salutation, and a kind of joke of the king's on his being wounded, I asked him, if he would retire and let me dress his forehead? Which he shewing an inclination to do, the king said, "Aye, go, and ask Guebra Mascal why he quarrels with his best friends, and prevents me from rewarding him as he otherwise would have deserved." I went out with Kefla Yasous, being very desirous this affair should not go to the Ras; and we found Guebra Mascal, in appearance, in extreme agony and despair.

The whole story was told distinctly to Kefla Yasous, who took it up in the most judicious manner. He said he had been detained at his tent, but had come to the king's presence expressly to give Guebra Mascal the just praise he deserved for his behaviour that day: that he was very happy that I, who was near him all the action, and was a stranger, and unprejudiced (as he might be thought not to be), had done it so justly and so handsomely. At the same time he could not help saying, that the quarrel with Yagoube in the palace, the taunting speech made without provocation in the king's presence, on the march, his apostrophe in the field, and the abrupt manner in which he ignorantly broke in upon the conversation before the king, interrupting and contradicting him

own commendations, shewed a distempered mind, and that he acted from a bad motive, which, if inquired into, would inevitably ruin him, both with the King and the Ras; and he had heard indeed it already had done with the former.

Guebra Mascal, now crying like a child, condemned himself for a malicious madman in the two first instances: but swore, that on the field he had no intention but to save me, if occasion threw it in his way; for which purpose alone it was he had cried out to me to stand firm, for the troops of Begemder were coming upon us, but that I did not understand his meaning. "Guebra Mascal advances nothing but truth," said I to Kefla Yasous; "I did not perfectly understand him to day in the field, as he spoke in his own language of Tigre, and stammers greatly; nor did I distinctly comprehend what he said across the pool, for the same reason, and the confusion we were in: I shall, however, most readily confess my obligation to him, for the opportunity he gave me to join the king. I am a stranger, and liable to err, whilst, for the same reason, I am entitled to all your protections and forgiveness. I am, moreover, the king's stranger, and as such, entitled to something more, as long as I conduct myself with propriety to every one. I have never spoken a word but in Guebra Mascal's praise, and in this I have done him no more than justice; his impatience perverted what I had said; but the real truth, as I spoke it, remains in the ears of the king, and of those that were bystanders, to whom I appeal."

Every thing went, after this, in the manner that was to be wished. Guebra Mascal and I vowed eternal friendship, of which Kefla Yasous professed himself the guarantee. All this passed while I was binding up his head. He went again to the king. For my

own part, tired to death, low in spirits, and cursing the hour that brought me to such a country, I almost regretted I had not died that day in the field of Serbraxos. I went to bed, in Ayto Engedan's tent, refusing to go to Ozoro Esther, who had sent for me. I could not help lamenting how well my apprehensions had been verified, that some of our companions at last night's supper, so anxious for the appearance of morning, should never see its evening. Four of them, all young men, and of great hopes, were then lying dead and mangled on the field; two others, besides Engedan, had been also wounded. I had, however, a sound and refreshing sleep. I think madness would have been the consequence, if this necessary refreshment had failed me; such was the horror I had conceived of my present situation.

On the 21st, Engedan was conveyed in a litter to Gondar; and early in the morning of that day arrived an officer from Powussen, together with three or four priests. He brought with him twenty or thirty kettle-drums belonging to the king, with their mules, and as many of the drummers as were alive. The errand was sham proposals of peace, as usual, and great professions of allegiance to the king. As Powussen's attack, however, that day, had something very personal in it, and that the story of Theodorus was founded upon a supposition that the king was to be slain on the field of Serbraxos, little answer was returned, only the red flag was sent back with a message, That perhaps, from the good fortune that had attended it, Powussen might wish to keep it for Theodorus his successor; but it was never after seen or heard of.

Gusho likewise, and Ayabdar, sent a kind of embassy to inquire after the king's health and safety; they wished him, in terms of the greatest respect, not to expose himself in the field, as he had done in th

last battle; or at least, if he chose to command his troops in person, that he should distinguish himself by some horse, or dress, as his predecessors used to do; and they concluded with severe reflections on Michael, as not sufficiently attentive to the safety of his sovereign. Gracious messages were returned to these two, and they all were dismissed with the usual presents of clothes and money.

About eleven o'clock in the forenoon, I received an order from the Ras to attend him, and, as I thought it was about the affair of Guebra Mascal, I went very unwillingly. I was confirmed in this by seeing him waiting with many of his friends without the tent, and still more so upon our being called in together: the Ras was conversing low to two priests, who, by their dress, seemed to have come lately from Gondar; he paid little regard to either of us, but nodded, and asked in Tigre how we did? Three or four servants, however, brought out new fine cotton clothes, which they put upon us both; and, upon another nod, several officers and priests, and a number of other people, conducted us to the king, though still, as the Ras had scarcely spoken to us, I wondered how this should end. After staying a little, we were both introduced; the Likaontes, or judges, some priests, and my friend the secretary, stood about the king, who sat in the middle of his tent, upon the stool Guangoul had sat down upon; the secretary held something in his lap, and, upon Guebra Mascal's first kneeling, bound a white fillet like a ribband round his forehead, upon which were written in black and red ink, *Mo ambassa am Nizelet Solomon am Negade Jude*, "The lion of the tribe of Judah, of the race of Solomon, has overcome." The secretary then declared his investiture; the king had given him in nef, or for military service for ever, three large villages in Dembea, which he named; and

this was proclaimed afterwards, by beat of drum, at the door of the tent. The king then likewise presented him with a gold knife, upon which he kissed the ground, and arose.

It was my turn next to kneel before the king. Whether there was any thing particular in my countenance, or what fancy came into his head, I know not, but when I looked him in the face, he could scarce refrain from laughing. He had a large chain of gold, with very massy links, which he doubled twice, and then put it over my neck, while the secretary said, "Yagoube, the king does you this great honour, not as payment of past services, but as a pledge that he will reward them if you will put it in his power." Upon this I kissed the ground, and we were both reconducted to the Ras, with our insignia; and, having kissed the ground before him, and then his hands, we both had leave to retire. He seemed very busy with people arrived from without; he only lifted up his head, smiled, and said, "Well, are you friends now?" We both bowed without answer, and left the tent.

The chain consisted of 184 links, each of them weighing 3 and 1-12th dwts. of fine gold. It was with the utmost reluctance that, being in want of every thing, I sold great part of this honourable distinction at Sennaar, in my return home; the remaining part is still in my possession. It is hoped my successors will never have the same excuse I had, for further diminishing this honourable monument which I have left them.

About a few hours after this, a much more interesting spectacle appeared before the whole camp. Ayto Tesfos, governor of Samen under Joas, had never laid down his arms, nor paid any allegiance to the present king or his father; but had constantly treated them as usurpers, and the Ras as a rebel and pa-

cide. He had continued in friendship with Fasil, but never would co-operate or join with him, not even when he was at Gondar as Ras. He lived in the inaccessible rock, called the Jews Rock, one of the highest of the mountains of Samen, where he maintained a large number of troops, with which he overawed the whole neighbouring country, and made perpetual inroads into Tigre. Enemy as he was to Ras Michael, he would not venture to take an active part against him, till the king's affairs were plainly going to ruin. I have already mentioned, that the last thing Michael did was to send Kefla Yasous, Basha Hezekias, and Welleta Michael, to dispossess him of his stronghold, if possible, and in this they had failed. But now that Tesfos saw there was no probability that Michael should be able to retreat to Tigre, he came at last to join Gusho, bringing with him only about a thousand men, having left all his posts guarded against surprise, and strong enough to cut off all recruits arriving from Tigre. Nothing that had yet happened ever had so bad an effect upon Michael's men as this appearance of Tesfos. It was a little before mid-day when his army appeared, and from the hills above marched down towards the valley below us, not two musquet-shot from our camp.

Though Samen is really on the west of the Tacazze, and consequently in the Amharic division of this country, yet, on account of its vicinity to Tigre, the language and customs are mostly the same with those of that province. There is a march peculiar to the troops of Tigre, which, when the drums of Tesfos beat at passing, a despondency seemed to fall on all the Tigran soldiers, greater than if ten thousand men of Amhara had joined the rebels. It was a fine day, and the troops, spread abroad upon the face of the hill, not only shewed more in number

than they really were, but also more security than they were, in point of prudence, warranted to do, when at so small a distance from such an army as ours.

Tesfos took a post very likely to distress us, as he had more than 300 musketry with him. He sat down with horse and foot in the middle of the valley before us, with part of his musketry posted upon the skirts of the mountain Belessen on one side, and part on the top of that long, even hill, dividing the valley from the river Mariam. Over his camp, like a citadel, is the rock that projects into the valley, from which the peasants of Mariam-Ohha had thrown the stones when we were returning to our camp after the last battle. Upon this rock Tesfos had placed a multitude of women and servants, who began to build straw-huts for themselves, as if they intended to stay there for some time, though there was still plenty of the female sex below with the camp. Indeed, I never remember to have seen so many women in proportion to any army whatever, no not even in our own.

If Tesfos had been long in coming, he was resolved, now he was come, to make up for his lost time, as he was not a mile and a half from our camp, and could see our horses go down to water, either at Deg-Ohha or Mariam; that same day at two o'clock, his horse attacked our men at watering, killed some servants, and took several horses. This behaviour of Tesfos was taken as a defiance to Kefla Yasous in particular, and to the army in general.

There was no person in the whole army, of any rank whatever, so generally beloved as Kefla Yasous; he was looked upon by the soldiers as their father. He was named by the Ras to the government of Samen, but had failed, as we have already stated, in dispos-

sessing Ayto Tesfos, whose disorderly march at broad mid-day, so near our army, the ostentatious beating of the Tigran march upon his kettle-drum as he passed, and his taking post so near, were all considered as meriting chastisement. That general, however, though very sensible of this bravado, did not venture to suggest any thing in the present situation of the army; but all his friends proposed it to him, that some reproof should be given to Tesfos, if it was only to raise the drooping spirits of the troops of Tigre. Accordingly 400 horse, and about 500 foot, armed with lances and shields only, without musketry, for fear of alarm, were ordered to be ready as soon as it was perfectly dark, that is, between seven and eight o'clock.

Tesfos having waited the coming of his baggage, and arranged his little camp to his liking, was seen to mount with about 300 horse, to go to the camp of Gusho and Powussen a little before sun-set, at which time Kefla Yasous was distributing plenty of meat to the soldiers. About eight o'clock they descended the hill unperceived even by part of our camp. Kefla Yasous was governor of Temben (a province on the S. W. of Tigre) immediately joining to Samen, and language and dialect was the same. The foot were ordered to take the lead, scattered in a manner not to give alarm, and the horse were to pass by the back of the low, even hill, in the other valley, along the banks of the river Mariam, close to the water, in order to cut off the retreat to the plain. A great part of the Samen soldiers were asleep, whilst a number of the mules that had been loaded were straggling up and down, and some of them returning to the camp. The Temben troops had now insinuated themselves among the tents, especially on the side of the hill.

The first circumstance that gave alarm was the appearance of the horse; but they were not taken for an enemy, but for Ayto Tesfos returning. Kefla Yasous

now gave the signal to charge, by beating a kettle-drum, and every soldier fell upon the enemy nearest him. It is impossible to describe the confusion that followed, nor was it easy to distinguish enemies from friends, especially for us on horseback; only those that fled were reckoned enemies. The greatest execution done by the horse was breaking the jars of honey, butter, beer, wine, and flour, and gathering as many mules together as possible to drive them away. Few of the enemy came our way towards the plain, but most fled up the hill: in an instant the straw huts upon the rock were set on fire, and Kefla Yasous had ordered rather to destroy the provisions than the men, since there was no resistance. I passed a large tent, which I judged to be that of Ayto Tesfos, which our people immediately cut open; but, instead of an officer of consequence, we saw, by the light of a lamp, three or four naked men and women, totally overpowered with drink and sleep, lying helpless, like so many hogs, upon the ground, utterly unconscious of what was passing about them. Upon a large tin platter, on a bench, lay one of the large horns, perfectly drained of the spirits that it had contained; it was one of the most beautiful, for shape and colour, I ever had seen, though not one of the largest. This horn was all my booty that night. Upon my return to Britain, it was asked of me by Sir Thomas Dundas of Carse, to serve for a bugle-horn to the Fauconberg regiment, to which, as being *partum sanguine*, it was very properly adapted. That regiment being disbanded soon after, I know not further what came of it; it is probably placed in some public collection, or at least ought to be.

The fire increasing on the hill, and several muskets having been heard, it was plain the enemy, in all the camps, were alarmed, and our further stay became

every moment more dangerous. Kefla Yasous now beat a retreat, and sent the horsemen all round to force the foot to make the best of their way back, ordering also all mules taken to be ham-stringed and left, not to retard our return. Trumpets and drums were heard from our camp, to warn us not to stay, as it was not doubted but mischief would follow; and accordingly we were scarce arrived within the limits of our camp when we heard the sound of horse in the valley.

Michael, always watchful upon every accident, no sooner saw the fires lighted on the hill, than he ordered Guebra Mascal to place a good body of musketeers about half way down the hill, as near as possible to the ford of Mariam, thinking it probable that the enemy would enter at both ends of the long hill, in order to surround those who were destroying their camp, which they accordingly did; whilst those of our people, who had taken to drinking, fell into the hands of the troops that came by the lower road, and were all put to death. Those that reached the upper ford served to afford us a severe revenge; for Guebra Mascal, after having seen them pass between him and the river, though it was a dark and very windy night, guessed very luckily their position, and gave them so happy a fire, that most of those who were not slain returned back without seeing Ayto Tesfos's camp, being afraid that some other trap might still be in their way.

In the morning of the 22d, we found that the slain were men of Begemder and Lasta. Tesfos, it seems, had been in Powussen's camp when he saw the fire lighted on the hill, and thence had provided an additional number of troops to attack Kefla Yasous before he had done his business; but in this, he miscarried. Tesfos' party was thus totally destroyed and dispersed,

his mules slaughtered, and his provisions spoiled.—About thirty of Kefla Yasous's infantry, however, lost their lives by staying behind, and intoxicating themselves with liquor. Of the horse, not a man was killed, or wounded. I was the only unfortunate person; and Providence had seemed to warn me of my danger the day before; for, passing then that rock which projected into the valley, the fire giving perfect light, the multitude assembled above, and prepared for that purpose, poured down upon us such a shower of arrows, stones, billets of wood, and broken jars, as is not to be imagined. Of these a stone gave me a very violent blow upon my left arm, while a small fragment of the bottom of a jar, or pitcher, struck me on the crest of my helmet, and occasioned such a concussion as to deprive me for a time of all recollection, so that, when lying in my tent at no great distance, I did not remember to have heard Guebra Mascal's discharge. I certainly had some presage that mischief was to happen me; for, passing that rock, just before we entered Tesfos' camp, I desired Tecla, when I returned, to allow fifty men to proceed up the hill, and cut those people in pieces who had stationed themselves so inconveniently; but he would not consent, being desirous to return without loss of time, and before the enemy knew the calamity that had befallen them.

Ayto Tesfos now became a little more humble, retreated to the south end of the long hill, till being joined, next day the 23d, by his neighbours, Samuel Mammo of Tzegade, and Heraclius of Walkayt, who had a very large force, he again removed nearer us, about half a mile farther than his first position, and extended his camp quite across the valley, from the foot of the hill to the river Mariam, keeping his headquarters on the top of the long, even hill, so often mentioned. Mammo and Heraclius had passed by

Gondar, and, being much superior in number, had taken Sanuda, Ayto Confu, and Ayto Engedan prisoners, and though the two last were wounded, carried them to Gusho's camp.

I need not trouble the reader with the attention shewed me upon my accident; all that was great and noble at court, from the king downwards, seemed to be as sensible of it as if it had happened to one of their own family; the Ras very particularly so; and I must own, above all, Guebra Mascal shewed himself a sincere convert, by a concern and friendship that had every mark of sincerity. Ozoro Esther was several times the next day at my tent, and with her the beautiful Tecla Mariam, whose sympathy and kindness would more than have compensated a greater misfortune; for, saving that it had occasioned an inflammation in my eyes, the hurt was of the slightest kind.

Many people came to-day from the several camps with proposals of peace, which ended in nothing, though it was visible enough to every one that a treaty of some kind was not only on foot, but already far advanced. In the evening a party of 400 foot and 50 horse, which went to Dembea to forage for the king, was surprised by Coque Abou Barea, and cut to pieces; after which that general encamped with Gusho, and brought with him about 3000 men.

Provisions were now become scarce in the camp, and there was a prospect that they would be every day scarcer; and what was still worse, Deg-Ohha, which long had stood in pools, was now almost dry, and, from the frequent use made of it by the number of beasts, began to have both an offensive smell and taste; whilst, every time we attempted to water at the Mariam river, a battle was to be fought with Tesfos' horse in the valley. On the other hand, an epidemical fever raged in the rebels' camp on the plain, espe-

cially in that of Gusho and Ayabdar. The rain, moreover, was now coming on daily, and something decisive became necessary for all parties.

On the 24th, in the morning, a message arrived from Gusho to the king desiring I might have liberty to come and bring medicines with me, for his whole family were ill of the fever. The king answered, that I had been wounded in the head, and was ill; nor did he believe I could be able to come; but, if I was, he should send me in the morning.

A little before noon the drums in the plain beat to arms. Heraclius, Mammo, and Tesfos on the side of the valley, Coque Abou Barea and Asahel Woodage on the side of the plain, with fresh troops, had obtained leave from Gusho and Powussen to try to storm our camp, without any assistance from the main army, in order to bring the whole to a speedy conclusion. There had been a time, when such an undertaking would not have been thought a prudent one to much better men than any of those who now were parties in it; but our spirits were greatly fallen, our number, too, much decreased; above all, a relaxation of discipline (and desertion, the consequence of it) began to prevail among us to an alarming degree. This was generally said to be owing to the despondency of the Tigre troops upon the arrival of Tesfos; but it required little penetration to discern, that all sorts of men were weary of constant fighting and hardships, for no other end but unjustly maintaining Michael in a post in which he governed at discretion, to the terror of the whole kingdom, and ruin of the constitution.

The hill of Serbraxos, when we first took post on it, was rugged and uneven, full of acacia and other ill-thriving-trees, and various stumps of these had been broken by the wind, or undermined by the torrents. The great need the soldiers had of fuel to roast the mi-

serable pittance of barley (which was all their food), had cleared away these incumbrances from the side of the hill, and the constant resort of men going up and down, had rendered the surface perfectly smooth and slippery; so that our camp did not appear as placed so high, nor nearly so inaccessible as it was at first.—For this reason, Ras Michael had ordered the soldiers to gather all the stones on the hill, and range them in small walls, at proper places, in a kind of zig-zag, under which the soldiers lay concealed and with their fire-arms protected the mules which went down to drink. Michael had lined all these little fortifications with musketry, from the bottom of the hill to the door of his tent and the king's.

About noon, the hill was assaulted on all sides that were accessible, and the ancient spirit of the troops seemed to revive, upon seeing the enemy were the aggressors. Without any aid of musketry, the king's foot repulsed Coque Abou Barea, and drove him from the hill into the plain, without any considerable stand on his part: the same success followed against Mammo and Heraclius; they were chased down the hill, and several of their men pursued and slain on the plain; but a large reinforcement coming from the camp, the king's troops were driven up the hill again, and Tesfos, with his musketry, had made a lodgement in a pit on the low side of one of these stone-walls Ras Michael had built for his own defence, from which he fired with great effect, and the king's troops were obliged to fall back to the brow of the hill, immediately below the tent, and that of the Ras's. In a moment appeared Woodage Asahel, with a large body of horse, supported likewise with a considerable number of foot. This was the most accessible part of the hill, and under the cover of Tesfos's continued fire: they mounted it with great gallantry, the troops above ex-

pecting them with their irons fixed at a proper elevation in the ground; for it must be here explained, that no Abyssinian soldier in battle rests his gun upon his hand, as every one is provided with a stick about four feet long, which hath hooks, or rests, on alternate intervals on each side, and which he sticks in the ground before him, and rests the muzzle of his gun upon it, according to the height of the object he is to aim at; and here is discovered the fatal and most unreasonable effect of fear in these troops, who have not the knowledge or practice of fire-arms, and are about to charge; for as soon as they hear this noise of planting the sticks (which is somewhat louder than that of our men cocking their muskets), they halt immediately, and give the fairest opportunity to their enemies to take aim; and, after thus suffering from a well-directed fire, they fall into confusion, and run, leaving the musketry time to recharge. This is as if they voluntarily devoted themselves to destruction; for if, either upon hearing the noise of setting the sticks in the ground, or before or after they have received the fire, the horse were to charge these musketeers, having no bayonets, at the gallop, they must be cut to pieces every time they were attacked by cavalry, the contrary of which is always the case.

Woodage Asahel had now advanced within about thirty yards of the musketry that were expecting him, when unluckily the hill became more steep, and Ayto Tesfos (for some reason not then known), ceased firing. The king was now close to the very brow of the hill, nor could any one persuade him to keep at a greater distance. I was not far from him, and had no sort of doubt but that I should presently see the whole body of the enemy destroyed by the fire awaiting them, and blown into the air. Woodage Asahel was very conspicuous by a red fillet, or bandage,

wrapt about his head, the two ends hanging over his ears, whilst he was waving with his hands for the troops below to follow briskly, and support those near him, who were impeded by the roughness and mossy quality of the ground. At this instant the king's troops fired, and I expected to see the enemy strewed dead along the face of the hill. Indeed we saw them speedily disappear, but like living men, riding and running down the declivity, so as even to excite laughter. Woodage Asahel, with two men only, bravely gained the top of the mountain, and, as he passed the king's tent, pulled off his red fillet, making a sign as of saluting it; and then galloped through the middle of the camp. He was now descending unhurt upon the left, where Abou Barea had been engaged and beaten, when Sebastos, a Greek, the king's cook, seventy five years of age, of whom I have already spoken in the campaign of Maitsha, lying behind a stone, with his gun in his hand, seeing the troops engage below, fired at him as he passed. The ball took place in the left side of his belly. He was seen stooping forward upon the tore of his saddle, with some men supporting him on each side, in his way to his tent, where he died in the evening, having, by his behaviour that day, deserved a better fate. Sebastos reported this feat of his to the king; but it was not believed till a confirmation of the fact came in the evening, when Sebastos was clothed, and received a reward from the king.

Tesfos had been observed not to fire since Woodage Asahel gained the steep part of the hill, and it was thought it was from fear of galling his friends; but it was soon known to be owing to another cause. Kefla Yasous had ordered two of his nephews to take a body of troops, with lances and shields only, and

these were to go round the Ras's tent, and down the side of the hill till they were even with Tesfos, behind the screen where he lay. These two young men, proud of the sole command, which they had then received for the first time, executed it with great alacrity; and though they were ordered by their uncle to watch the time when Tesfos had fired, and then to run in upon him, they disdained that precaution, but coming speedily upon him, part of them threw down the stones under which he was concealed, and part attacked him in the hollow, and, while much intent upon the success of Woodage Asahel, he was in a moment overpowered and dislodged; and, being twice wounded, with great difficulty escaped. Seventeen of his match-locks were brought into the camp, and with them a man of great family in Samen, a relation or friend of Kefla Yasous. This person, after having been regaled with the best that was in the camp, and clothed anew after their custom, was sent back the same night to Ayto Tesfos, with this short message, "Tesfos had better be upon his rock again, if my boys can beat him upon the plain at broad noonday."

Coque Abou Barea, after having attempted several times to ascend the hill, was beaten back as often, and obliged to desist. On the king's side only eleven men were killed. The loss of the enemy was variously reported. Sixty-three men only, and several horses of those with Woodage Asahel, were left upon the side of the hill, after the fire of near 1000 muskets—so contemptible is the most dangerous weapon in an ignorant and timid hand. That night, the body of musketeers called Lasta, part of the king's household (in number about 300 men), deserted in a body. One of the worst consequences of that day's engagement was, that the enemy, when in possession of the

foot of the hill, had thrown a great number of dead bodies, both of men and beasts, into Deg-Ohha, which therefore was now abandoned altogether by our troops. To make up for this, Ras Michael, that very evening, advanced 2000 men upon the end of the long hill, immediately below him, which post was never molested after, so that our beasts had water in greater plenty and safety than when they were at a less considerable distance.

Below the north-west side of the hill, where it was a steep precipice, two or three pools of water were found retaining all their original purity, out of the reach or knowledge of the enemy, in the bed of the torrent which surrounded the north side of the mountain: the descent was very difficult for beasts; but thither I went several times on foot, and bathed myself, especially my head, in very cold water, which greatly strengthened my eyes, much weakened from the blow I had received.

CHAP. IX.

Interview with Gusho in his Tent—Conversation and interesting Intelligence there—Return to the Camp—King's Army returns to Gondar—Great Confusion in that Night's march.

On the 25th of May, early in the morning, I went to Gusho. When I arrived near his tent, I dismounted my mule, and, as the king had commanded me, bared myself to below my breast, the sign of being bearer of the king's orders. Four men were now sent from the tent, who, two and two, supported each arm, and introduced me in this state immediately to Gusho. He was sitting on a kind of bed, covered with scarlet cloth, and edged with a deep gold fringe. As soon as I came near him, I began, "Hear what the king says to you." In a moment he rose; and, stripping himself bare to the waist, he bowed with his forehead on the scarlet cloth, but did not, as was his duty, stand on the ground, and touch it with his forehead, though there was a good Persian carpet; as pride and newly-acquired independence had released him from those forms, in the observance of which he had been brought up from his childhood.

On seeing him attentive, I continued; "The king sends you word by me, and I declare to you from my own skill as a physician, that the fever now amongst you will soon become mortal; as the rains increase, you will die; consequently, being out of your allegiance, God only knows what will happen to you afterwards. The king therefore wishes you to preserve your health, by going home to Amhara, taking Powussen, and all the rest along with you, who are ill likewise, and the sooner the better, as he heartily wishes to be rid of you all at once, without your leaving any of your friends behind you." It was with difficulty I kept my gravity in the course of my harangue; it did not seem to be less so on his part, as at the end he broke out in a great fit of laughter. "Aye, Aye, Yagoube," says he, "I see you are still the old man; but tell the king from me, that if I were to do what you just now desire of me, it was then I should be afraid to die, it was then I should be out of my duty; assure the king," continued Gusho, "I will do him better service. Were I to go home and leave Michael with him, I, who am no physician, declare, the Ras would prove in the end a much more dangerous disease to him than all the fevers in Dembea."

I then introduced his relation Sertza Denghel, who stood with the people behind; and, as he had on his monk's dress, Gusho at first did not know him. He had been well informed, however, of his having saved the king, and of the blow that he had received from him. He said every thing in commendation of the young man, and his honourable action, adding, that the preservation of kings was a gift of Providence, particularly reserved for the people of Amhara. He then ordered new clothes to be brought and put upon Sertza Denghel, who scrupled to take off his cowl;

on which Gusho violently tore it from his head, dashed it on the floor, stamped twice on it with his foot, and then threw it behind the back of the sofa. At parting, Gusho ordered him five ounces of gold; a large present, for one that loved money as Gusho did, commanding him strictly to return to his duty, and profession, and ordering me to carry him to the king, and see him reinstated in his office in the palace.

I then desired his permission to visit the sick, and left ipecacuanha and bark with Antonio, (his Greek servant,) and directions how to administer them. One of his nephews, (Ayto Aderesson) the young man who had lost Gusho's horse, had the small pox, upon which I warned Gusho seriously of the danger to which he exposed all his army, if that disease broke out amongst them, and advised him to send his nephew forthwith to the church of Mariam, under the care of the priests, which he did accordingly.

The tent being cleared, he asked me if I had seen Welleta Selasse; if I was with her when she died; and who was said to have poisoned her, Ras Michael or herself, or if I had ever heard that it was Ozoro Esther? I told him, her friends had sent for me from the camp, but missed me, knowing I was at Koscam with Ayto Confu, who had been wounded; but that I could have been of little service to her if they had found me sooner: That she had scarce any signs of life when I entered her room, and died soon after: That she confessed she had taken arsenic herself, and named a black servant of hers, a Mahometan, from whom she had bought it; and the reason was, her fears that her grandfather, Ras Michael, whom she had always looked upon as the murderer of her father, should force her when he returned to Gondar. He

seemed exceedingly attentive to all I said, and mused for a couple of minutes after I had done speaking.

A plentiful breakfast was then brought us, and many of his officers sat down to it. I observed likewise some people of Gondar, who had formerly fled to Fasil at Michael's first coming. He said he wished me to bleed him before I went away, which I assured him I would by no means do; for if he was well, as I then saw he was, the unnecessary bleeding him might occasion sickness; and, if he was dangerously ill, he might die, when the blame would be laid upon me, and expose me to mischief afterwards. "No," says he, "I could certainly trust you, nor would any of my people believe any harm of you; but I am glad to see you so prudent, and that you have a care of my life, for the reason I shall give you afterwards." I bowed, and he made me then tell him all that passed in my visit to Fasil, which I did, without concealing any circumstance. All the company laughed, and he more than any, only saying, "Fasil, Fasil, thou wast born a Galla, and a Galla thou shalt die."

Breakfast being over, the tent was cleared, and we were again left alone, when he put on a very serious countenance. "You know," says he, "you are my old acquaintance. I saw you with Michael after the battle of Fagitta, as also the presents you brought, and heard the letters read, both those that came from Metical Aga, and those of Ali Bey from Cairo. All the Greeks here who have considerable posts, and are proud and vain enough, have yet declared to us several times (as Antonio, my servant, did to me last night), that, in their own country, the best of them are not higher in rank than your servants; and that those who hitherto have come into this country were no better. We know then, and the king is sensible, that

in your own country you are equal to the best of us, and perhaps superior, and as such, even in these bad times, you have been treated. Now, this being the case, you are wrong to expose yourself like a common soldier. We all know, and have seen, that you are a better horseman, and shoot better than we; your gun carries farther, because you use leaden bullets; so far is well; but then you should manage this so as never to act alone, or from any thing that can have the appearance of a private motive *." "Sir," said I, "you know that when I first came recommended, as you say, into this country, Ayto Aylo, the most peaceable, as well as the wisest man in it, the Ras, and I believe yourself, but certainly many able and considerable men who were so good as to patronise me, did then advise the putting of me into the king's service and household, as the only means of keeping me from robbery and insult. You said that I could not be safe one instant after the king left Gondar, being a single man, who was supposed to have brought money with him; that therefore I must connect myself with young noblemen, officers of consequence about court, whose authority and friendship would keep ill-disposed people in awe. The king observing in me a facility of managing my horse and arms, with which, until that time, he had been unacquainted, placed me about his person, both in the palace and in the field, for his own amusement, and I may say instruction, and for my safety; and this advice has proved so good, that I have never once deviated from it but my life has been in danger. The first attempt I made to go to the cataract, Guebra Mehedin waylaid and intended to murder me. When the king

* He meant, from the instigation of Ozoro Esther.

was in Tigre, Woodage Asahel designed to do me the same favour by the Galla he sent from Samseen; and so did Coque Abou Barea at Degwassa, by the hands of Welleta Selasse. No safety, therefore, then remained to me but in adhering closely to the king, as I have ever since done, and was advised from the first to do, which indispensibly brought me to Serbraxos, or wherever he was in person. You cannot think it is from a motive of choice that a white man like myself runs the risk of losing his life, or limbs, so far from home, and where there is so little medical assistance, in a war where he has no motive that can concern him."

"Do not mistake me, Yagoube," says Gusho; "your behaviour at Serbraxos does you honour, and will never make you an enemy, so does the like affair with Kefla Yasous; there is no man you can so properly connect yourself with as Kefla Yasous; all I wanted to observe to you is, that it is said Woodage Asahel would have escaped safely from the mountain if you had not shot him, and that yours was the only musket that was fired at him; which is thought invidious in you, being a stranger, as he is the head of the Edjow Galla, the late king's guards; they may yet return to Gondar, and will look upon you as their enemy, because a leaden bullet was found in Woodage Asahel's body fired at him by you."—"Sir," said I, "it is very seldom a man in such a case as this can have the power of vindicating himself to conviction, but that I now happily can do. All the Greeks in the king's army, their sons and families, all Mahometans, who have been in Arabia, India, or Egypt, use leaden bullets. The man who shot Woodage Asahel is well known to you. He is the king's old cook, Sebastos, a man past seventy, who could not be able to kill a sheep till somebody first tied its legs. He himself in-

formed the king of what he had done, and brought witnesses in the usual form, claiming a reward for his action, which he obtained. It was said that I, too, killed the man who carried the red flag of Theodorus at Serbraxos, though no leaden bullet, I believe, was found in him. A soldier picked up this flag upon the field, and brought it to me. I paid him, indeed, for his pains; and, when I presented the flag to the king, told him what I had seen, that the bearer of it had fallen by a shot from Guebra Mascal. I had not a gun in my hand all that day at Serbraxos, nor all that other day when Woodage Asahel was slain. I saw him pass within less than ten yards where I was standing behind the king, in great health and spirits, with two other attendants; but, so far from firing at him, I was very anxious in my own mind that he should get as safely out of the camp as he had gallantly, though imprudently, forced himself into it. It is not a custom known in my country for officers to be employed to pick out distinguished men at such advantage, nor would it be considered there as much better than murder: certainly no honour would accrue from it. But when means are necessary to keep officers of the enemy at a proper distance, for consequences that might otherwise follow, there are common soldiers chosen for that purpose, and for which they are not the more esteemed. This, however, I will confess to you, that when either the king's horses or mine went down to Deg-Ohha to water, and never but then, I sat upon the rock above, and did all in my power to protect them, and the men who were with them, and to terrify the enemy who came to molest them, by shewing the extensive range of our rifle guns; and that very day when Ayto Teslos arrived, some of his troops having driven off the mules, among which were

two of mine, I did, I confess, with my own hand shoot four of them from the rock, and at last obliged the rest to keep at a greater distance; but as for Woodage Asahel, I disown having had arms in my hand the day he entered the camp, or having been absent, till late in the evening, from the king's person."

"Now, all this is very well," continued Gusho; "who killed Theodorus, or the man at Serbraxos; who killed Ayto Tesfos's men, is no object of inquiry; Deg-Ohha was within the line of the king's camp, and they that wanted to deprive him of this possession, or the use of it, did it at their peril. If you had shot Ayto Tesfos himself, attempting to deprive you of water for the camp, no man in all Amhara would have said you did wrong; but I am very much pleased with what you tell me of Woodage Asahel. The short yellow man, who breakfasted with you, was one of those two who accompanied Woodage Asahel when he was shot, and is a friend of mine; he brought word that he was killed by a Frank, and the leaden bullet fixed it upon you."

This man was now immediately called for. He went by the nickname of Goul, or the Giant, from his small size and debility of body. "Is this your man," says Gusho, "who shot Woodage Asahel on the hill?" "O, by no means," says Goul; "he was an old man with a long grey beard, and a white cloth round his head. This man I knew well. I saw him with Fasil. This is Yagoube, the king's friend; he would not do such a thing." "No, certainly, he would not," says Gusho, "and so mind that you tell Woodage Asahel's friends." Upon this he withdrew. "And now," says Gusho, "talk no more upon this affair, I will take the rest upon myself. There is a servant of Metical Aga's now in the camp, sent over by

desire of your friends and countrymen * at Jidda, to know if you are alive and well. He has also a message to the king, and perhaps I may send him to the camp to-morrow, but more probably defer it till we meet at Gondar. Mean time, remember my injunction to you, to keep close by the person of the king, and then no accident can befal you in the confusion that will soon happen." I thanked him for his friendly advice, which I promised to follow. I then asked for Ayto Confu and Engedan, as also for Metical Aga's servant, but he answered, I could not then see them.

He had now in his hand some silk paper, in which they generally wrap their ingots of gold, and he was preparing to slip this into my hand at parting, in the same manner we do the fee of a physician in Europe. "You forget," said I, "what you mentioned in the morning, that I am no cast-away, no Greek nor Armenian servant, but perhaps of equal rank to yourselves: if I wanted money, Metical Aga's servant would procure it for me upon demand. It is your wife and two daughters who are ill; and when you shall hereafter be great, and governing every thing at Gondar, I will by them put you in mind of any piece of friendship I may stand in need of at your hand; and you shall grant it."—"You are a good prophet, Yagoube," says he; "and so I shall; but remember my advice; I know you are a friend of Ozoro Esther, but she cannot protect you; Ozoro Altash † may: the best of all is to keep close to the king, to defend yourself if any body molests you on your way to Gondar, and leave the rest to me."

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* Captain Thomas Price, of the Lion of Bombay.

† Her daughter was married to Powussen.

An officer was now appointed to conduct me across the plain, and several servants laden with fish and fruit. About a hundred yards from the tent, a man muffled up met me, whom I found to be a servant of Engedan. "Your army will disband," says he to me, in a low tone of voice; "keep by the king, or Aylo, my master's brother, and he will bring you over here." Having left him, we continued across the plain, and saw several small parties of horse patroling, but they came not near us. My conductor said they were Galla, waiting for some opportunity to do mischief. He told me that Ozoro Welleta Israel, and her son Aylo, had joined their army that day with 10,000 men from Gojam, to no purpose at all, continued he, but that of eating up the country. But your friend the Iteghe could not see Ras Michael fall without giving him a shove, though she has staid till the very last day before she ventured, for fear of accidents. Gusho's men set the fish down at the advanced guard, and returned with the officer who had attended me, while I went towards the king's tent, musing what all this might mean, what power was to carry us to Gondar, disband the army, depose Michael, and not hurt the king.

I found the king had not been well, and had taken warm water to vomit; a remedy I advised him sometimes to make use of, not choosing to venture on all occasions to give him medicines, and he was then quiet. I therefore went to Ras Michael, who was alone, and seemingly much chagrined. He interrogated me strictly as to what passed between me and Gusho. I told him the discourse about Woodage Asahel's death, and about Fasil; then about the sick family I had seen, the offer of money, the fish, &c. The same I repeated when I went back to the king; but nothing about our meeting at Gondar. I begged, however, as he still complained a little of his head, that he would see nobody

that night, but lie down and compose himself, allowing me to wait in the secretary's apartment till he should awake. I thought he embraced this proposal willingly, Ozoro Esther having had a long conference with him the night before. I do not imagine the state of the realm had much share in their conversation. After he was laid down, I went and found Azage Kyrillos, and with him the beautiful daughter of Tecla Mariam, who was just dressed to go to Ozoro Esther's. She said she would either take me along with her to Ozoro Esther's, or stay, and the king would send us supper at her father's. I excused myself from either, on account of the king's indisposition, and my business with her father, who, guessing by my countenance I had something material to communicate, sent her on her visit, and so we were left alone.

As he was a man with whom I had always lived on the most confidential friendship, and knew the same subsisted between him and the king, I made no scruple to tell him, word for word, what I had heard from Gusho, and Engedan's servant. He said, without any seeming surprise, "Why, we are all worn out; but state all this to the king." Soon after, came in the slave who had the charge of the king's bed-chamber, and told the secretary that the king found himself well, only wanted to know what he should drink. I ordered him some water, with some ripe tamarinds, a liquor he usually took in time of Lent. "See him and advise him yourself," says the secretary. I accordingly went in, and told the king the whole story. He seemed to be in great agitation, repeating frequently, "O God! O God! O Guebra Menfus Kedus*!"—"Who is this Guebra Menfus Kedus?" said I after-

* Servant of the Holy Ghost.

wards to Tecla Mariam, who in his heart believed in him no more than I did. "Why," answered he gravely, "he is a great saint, who never ate or drank from his mother's womb till his death, said mass at Jerusalem every day, and came home at night in form of a stork."—"But a bad regimen his," said I, "for such violent exercise."—"That is not all," says Tecla Mariam, "he fought with the devil once in Tigre, and threw him over the rock Amba Salam, and killed him."—"I wish you joy," said I, "this is good news indeed." All this conversation had passed in half a whisper. The king was quiet; but hearing me say the last words, he started, and cried, "What joy, what good news, Yagoube?"—"Why," said I, "sir, it is only Tecla Mariam informing me that the devil is dead, which is good news, at least to me, who always dreaded falling into his clutches."—"Aye," says the king, "the monks say so; it must have been long ago; but the saint was surely a holy man."

Though the king was violently agitated, yet he neither said that he did or did not understand what was meant by Gusho and Engedan, but only ordered me home immediately, saying, "As you value your life, open not you mouth to man or woman, nor seem to take particular care about any thing, more than you did before; trust all in the hands of the Virgin Mary, and Guebra Menfus Kedus."

I needed no incitement to go to my tent, where I went immediately to bed. I cannot say but I had a ray of hope that Providence had begun the means which were to extricate me out of the difficulties of my present situation, better and sooner than I had before imagined; I therefore fell soon into a profound sleep, satisfied that I should be quickly called if any thing ailed the king. The lights were now all put out, and, except the cry of the guards going their

rounds, very little noise in the camp, considering the vast number of people it contained. I was in a profound sleep when Francisco, a Greek servant of the Ras, a brave and veteran soldier, but given a little to drink, came bawling into my tent, "It is madness to sleep at this time."—"I am sure," said I, very calmly, "I should be mad if I was not to sleep. Why, when would you have me to take my rest? and what is the matter?"—"Get up," cries he, "quickly, for we shall all be cut to pieces in a minute."—"Then hang me," said I, "if I don't lie still; for if I have no longer to live, it is not worth while to dress."—"Fasil," continued he, "has surprised the camp, and gives no quarter."—"Fasil!" said I, "impossible: but go to the guard commanded by Laeca Mariam, and if he has a horse ready saddled bring him to me."

On this Francisco catched up a lance and shield that were in my tent, for fear of danger in the way, and ran off. In a minute he returned to ask the *word*. "Googue," said I, "is the parole;" it signifies Owl. "A curse upon his father," says he meaning the owl's father), "and a curse upon their fathers who gave such unlucky words for their parole at night; no wonder misfortunes happen," says he, in Greek: he then returned to the guard under Laeca Mariam. In the mean time, surveying the camp around, I could not help doubting the truth of this alarm; for not a soul was stirring about Kefla Yasous's tent, and the light scarcely burning. On the other hand, however, there seemed several in the tent of the Ras, and people moving about it, though the Tigre guard around were quiet, who, I knew well, would have been alarmed by the motion of a mouse.

There was, however, still a light, and an unusual noise in the upper end of the camp to the N. E.

Francisco now returned from the king's tent, and, without my speaking to him, said, in a great passion, "Those black fellows are all become mad; you don't keep them in any sort of order."—"Has Laeca Mariam got ready a horse for me," said I: "where is he?"—"When I delivered your orders," replied Francisco, "to have a horse ready for you, he said there were fifty, but did not suppose you intended galloping to night." Francisco continued, "I told him Fasil was in the camp; at which he laughed outright, said I was drunk, and wondered you had given me the parole, with a curse upon its father; a great catch this parole, to be sure, it will make me rich."—"I am afraid," said I, "friend, Laeca Mariam hath stated the truth; at least I never heard of an army cut to pieces so very quietly as ours is." While I was speaking, the flambeaux at the Ras's tent were all suddenly lighted, which was likewise done by Kefla Yasous, all the general officers, and lastly from the King's tent. This is a kind of torch, or flambeau, used by the janizary Aga, at Cairo and Constantinople, when he patroles the streets; in the night-time it is lighted, but the fire does not appear till you whirl it three or four times round your head, and then it bursts out into a bright flame. Michael had sixteen always on the guard, ever since the attempt upon his life by the Gurague. In a moment all the camp was lighted, and the people awakened, whilst, as nobody knew the reason, the tumult increased. Francisco, with great exultation upon seeing the Ras's torches lighted, cried, "See who is drunk now; where are your jokes? this will be a fine night, and nobody is armed." "Sir," said I, "you saw Laeca Mariam and his guard armed; so is every other guard in the camp as much as ever; and you may thank God you have my servant's lance and shield, so you are armed. I

may drink coffee, though I very much fear there may be some broil on foot, of which you may be yourself part of the occasion. Go, however, to the Ras's tent, and ask if he has any orders for me."

In short, we soon after found that the cause of all this disturbance was, that some part of Tesfos's men had come to the back of the camp, and attempted to recover the mules which had been taken from them; and they had succeeded in part, when they were discovered, pursued, and some of the mules retaken. At the sight of armed men running up and down the hill, an alarm spread that nobody knew the occasion of, till the Ras caused the mule-keeper to be bastinadoed in the morning. That day, the 26th, we received advice, that the Edjow Galla, and some other horse of the same district, had massacred all the people they met on their way to and from Gondar, and that a body of troops had marched into the town, which threatened to set it on fire if any more provisions were sent to the camp.

We were now without food or water; a great council was therefore held, in which it was agreed to decamp the 28th, in the night, and return to Gondar on the 29th, in the morning. A present of fresh provisions had been sent to Ras Michael, and, in one of the baskets, a number of torches. A message was also delivered from Gusho, "That as he was informed the Ras intended travelling in the night, that therefore he had sent him store of torches, lest he should mistake his way to Gondar, by having burnt all he had by him in the last night's alarm about Fasil." He declared, moreover, in the name of all the confederates, "That it was their resolution not to molest him in his march; that the whole kingdom was in alliance with them to save the effusion of blood, now abso-

lutely unnecessary, and to meet and treat with him at Gondar."

Upon receipt of this message, with the torches, the Ras flew into a most furious passion. He called for Kefla Yasous and Guebra Mascal, and sharply upbraided them with having betrayed him to his enemies. He gave orders to the troops to refresh themselves, for he was that day resolved to try the fortune of another battle. To this, however, it was replied by all the principal officers, "That the army was starving, therefore a refreshment at this time was out of the question, and that fighting was as much so; for Gusho, having sent to the Abuna and to the King, had solemnly excommunicated his whole army if any harm was offered to them in person or baggage, if they marched directly back to Gondar that night, as they had of their own accord before intended; and that the army was resolved, therefore, as one man, to return; and, if the Ras did not agree to it, there was great fear they would disband in the night, and leave him in the hands of the enemy, without terms." The Ras was now obliged to make a virtue of necessity; and it was given in orders, that the army should be ready to decamp at eight in the evening, but nobody should strike their tent before that hour on pain of death. The old general was ashamed to be seen, for the first time, flying before his enemies.

It was plain to be read in everybody's countenance, that this resolution was agreeable to them all. I confess, however, that I thought the measure a very dangerous one, considering how much blood the king's army had so lately spilt, and the ordinary prejudices universally adopted in that country, allowing to every individual the right of retaliation. Before I struck my tent, I called Yasine to me, and told him that Ayto Confu being wounded and a prisoner, myself neces-

sarily obliged to attend the king, and the event of that night's retreat unknown to any body, I thought he could do neither himself nor me any further service by staying where he was; that therefore, so long as the road to Azazo was open to him, he should march through Dembea, as if going to Fasil, then turn on the right behind the hills of Koscam, and make the best of his way to Ras el Feel, in which government he should maintain the strictest discipline, and be particularly careful of the intrigues of Abd el Jeleel, the former governor, whose application I should defeat if I had any interest, or if the king remained alive, both which I thought very improbable. I annexed, moreover, this condition, that on his part he should be active and unwearied in procuring information concerning the properest way of my attempting to reach Sennaar; I enjoined him also to be very circumstantial in all the advices which he sent to me at Gondar; that they should be written in Arabic, and sent directly to me by my black servant Soliman, who was with him, and told him that I myself should join him as soon as possible. Yasine, with tears in his eyes, protested against leaving me in the dangerous situation of that night; he said we should be all cut to pieces as soon as we were in the plain, and that there was not a man of the troops under him who would not rather die with me, than abandon me to be murdered by the hands of these faithless Christian dogs, who never were to be bound by oath or promise. He said, it would be incomparably safer, as they were all under my command, that I should put myself at their head, and continue my march to Ras el Feel, where, if I was once arrived, Ayto Confu's troops being behind me at Tcherkin (that is, between me and Gondar), I might, at my own leisure, solicit a safe conduct to Sennaar.

I confess this proposal at first struck me as extremely feasible; but reflecting on my solemn promise to the king not to leave him without his direct permission, that Gusho had assured me of safety if I kept close to his person, that it would be a breach of trust to leave my Greek servant unprovided at Gondar, and that forsaking my instruments would have the effect of making my return through the desert imperfect,—I rejected this proposal, and dismissed Yasine, with orders to adhere inviolably to the instructions I had given him.

As for the king himself, his countenance was not changed, nor did he say to me one word that day in confidence, whether he did or did not intend to return to Gondar.

As no body knew what conditions were made, or whether any were really made at all, fear kept the common soldiers under obedience till it was night. The first who began to file off, it being near dark, were the women, who carried the mills, jars, and the heavy burdens; these were in great numbers. Soon after, the soldiers were in motion, and the Ras and the King's tents were struck just as it was night; darkness freed the whole army from obedience to orders, and a confusion, never to be forgotten or described, presently followed, every body making the best of their way to get safe down the hill. At first setting out I kept close by the king; but, without treading upon, or riding over a number of people, I could not keep my place. I was now, for the first time, on one of the strong black horses that came last from Sennaar, given me by the king; and he was so impatient and fretful at being pressed on by the crowd of men and beasts, that there was no keeping him within any sort of bounds. The descent of the hill had become very

slippery, and men, horses, and mules, were rolling promiscuously over one another.

I resolved to try for myself some other way that might be less thronged. I went to the place where Woodage Asahel descended when he was shot by Sebastos; but the ground there was more uneven, and fully as much crowded. I then crossed the road to the eastward, where the Ras's tent stood, and where Kefla Yasous's two nephews had gone round to dislodge Ayto Tesfos: there was a considerable number of people even here, but it was not a crowd, and they were mostly women. I determined to attempt it, and got into a small slanting road, which I hoped would conduct me to the bed of the torrent; but I found, upon going half way down the hill, that, in place of a road, it had been a hollow made by a torrent, which ended on a precipice; and below, and on each side of this, the hill was exceedingly steep, the small distance I could see.

In Abyssinia, the camp-ovens for making their bread are in form of two tea-saucers joined bottom to bottom, and are something less than three feet in diameter, being made of a light, beautiful potter's ware, which, although red when first made, turns to a glossy black colour after being greased with butter. This being placed upright, a fire of charcoal is put under the bottom part; the bread, made like pancakes, is pasted all within the side of the upper cavity, or bowl, over which is laid a cover of the same form or shape. It is in form of a broad wheel, and a woman carries one of these upon her back for baking bread in the camp. It happened that, just as I was deliberating whether to proceed or return, a woman had rolled one of these down the hill on purpose, or let it fall by chance; which ever was the case, it came bounding, and just past behind my horse. Whether it touched

him or not, I cannot tell: but it determined him, without further deliberation, to spurn all controul of his rider. On the first leap that he made, it was with the utmost difficulty I avoided going over his head: I will not pretend to say what followed. I was deprived of all sense of reflection, till, stumbling often, and sliding down upon his haunches oftener, I found myself at the bottom of the hill, perfectly stupified with fear, but safe and sound in body, though my saddle was lying upon the horse's neck.

Soon after, I saw a fire lighted on the top of the hill above where Ras Michael's tent stood, and I did not doubt but that it was the work of some traitor, as a signal to the rebels that we were now in the plain, in the greatest confusion. I made all haste therefore to go round and join the king, passed Deg-Ohha incumbered with carcases of men and beasts, from which, as well as from the bottom of the hill, a terrible stench arose, which must soon have forced us out of the camp, if we had not resolved, of our own accord, to remove. A little further, in the opening to the river Mariam, I found myself in the middle of about twenty persons, three or four of whom were upon mules, in long clean white clothes, as if in peace, the rest apparently soldiers; this was Engedan's brother, Aylo, whom I was passing without recollecting him, when he cried, "Where do you come from, Yagoube? this is not a night for white men like you to be alone; come with me, and I will carry you to your friend Engedan." "My horse," replied I, "found a new way for itself down the hill, and I confess I would rather be alone than with so much company: our colour, by this light, seems to be pretty much the same. Remember me to Engedan. I am seeking to join the king."

Immediately after, I got into the crowd: though they were now in the plain, they still kept in a line

close to the foot of the mountain, as in fear of the enemy's horse. I passed on at as brisk a walk as my horse could go; nor was I so tender of those who were before me in the plain, as I had been on the side of the hill. Among those that were still in the crowd, that had not yet gone down the hill, I heard the Abuna's servant saying they had lost their mules, and denouncing excommunication and curses against those who had stolen his baggage. I could not refrain from a fit of laughter at the stupidity of that priest, to think any man of such a nation would pay attention to his anathemas in such a scene. Soon after, however, I overtook the Abuna himself, with Ozoro Altash. He asked me in Arabic, and in a very mournful tone of voice, "What I thought they were going to do?" I answered, in the same language, "Pray for them, father, for they know not what to do." Ozoro Altash now told me the king was a great way before them, with Ras Michael, and advised me to stay and accompany her. As she spoke this confidently, and it was part of the advice Gusho had given me if I missed the king, I was deliberating what course I should pursue, when a great noise of horse and men was heard on the side of the plain, and presently the Abuna and Ozoro Altash were surrounded by a large body of horsemen, whose cries and language I did not understand, and whom therefore I took for Galla. As I found my horse strong and willing, and being alone, and unincumbered with baggage, I thought it was better to keep free, and not trust to who these strangers might be. I therefore got out of the line of the troops towards the plain, spurred my horse, and arrived at the body of cavalry where the king was.

As I had a white turban upon my head, (having shaved the fore part of it after the blow I had received from the stone) I was employed taking this off before

I presented myself to the king, when somebody said out loud, "Ozoro Esther is taken prisoner." Ras Michael answered, "That is impossible; Ozoro Esther is here." "It is Ozoro Altash and the Abuna," said I, from behind; "I came just now from them." "By whom are they taken?" said the king. "By the Galla, I believe," answered I; "at least by men whose language I did not understand, though indeed I took no time to consider; but they are close in our rear, and I suppose they will be here presently." "Here!" says the Ras, "what will they do here? It must be Powussen, and the troops of Lasta, to recover his mother-in-law, that she may not go to Gondar; and it is the Tcheratz Agow language that Yagoube has taken for Galla." "It is so," says another horseman; "the people of Lasta have carried her off, but without hurting any body." This I thought a good sign, and that they were under orders; for a bloodier or more cruel race was not in the army, the Galla not excepted; and they had met with their deserts, and had suffered considerably in the course of this short campaign.

The whole road was now as smooth as a carpet; and we had scarce done speaking when Ras Michael's mule fell flat on the ground, and threw him upon his face in a small puddle of water. He was quickly lifted up unhurt, and set upon his mule again. We passed the Mogetch, and at about 200 yards from the bridge, upon ground equally plain as the former, the mule fell again, and threw the Ras another time in the dirt; on which a general murmur and groan was heard from all his attendants, for every body interpreted this as an omen that his power and fortune were gone from him for ever. Another mule was speedily brought, but he refused to mount it, and we passed on by the Mahometan town, and up to Confu's house,

by Aylo Meidan. I could not, however, help reflecting, how justly the Ras was now punished for the murder of the singers in that very spot, when he returned from Mariam Ohha, and entered Gondar. The king went directly to the palace, the Ras to his own house; and, by the secretary's advice, I went with him to that of the Abuna, where I left my Greek servants with my gold chain, and some trifles I wanted to preserve, together with my instruments. I then dressed myself in the habit of peace, and returned to the palace, where remembering the advice of Gusho, I resolved to expect my fate with the king. Upon seeing me with the fore part of my head shaven, and remembering the cause, as his first mark of favour he ordered me to cover my head, a thing otherwise not permitted in the king's presence to any of his household.

The king's servants brought me a bull's hide for my bed; and although many a night I have wanted rest upon less dangerous occasions, I scarcely ever slept more soundly, till I heard the cracking of the whips of the Serach Massery, about five o'clock in the morning of the 29th. He performs this function much louder than a French postilion upon finishing a post, it being the signal for the king to rise. There was, indeed, no occasion for this custom, now there was no court, nor judgment of causes civil or criminal. The palace was quite deserted; even the king's slaves, of both sexes, (fearing to be carried off to Begemder and Amhara) had hid themselves among the monks, and in the houses of private friends, so that the king was left with very few attendants.

CHAP. X.

Rebel Army invests Gondar—King's Troops deliver up their Arms—The Murderers of Joas assassinated—Gusho made Ras—Ras Michael carried away Prisoner by Powussen—Iteghe's return to Koscam—Fasil arrives at Gondar—King acknowledged by all Parties—Bad Conduct of Gusho—Obliged to fly, but is taken and put in irons.

About eight o'clock in the morning of the 29th of May, the day immediately following the night of our retreat, came Gusho's Fit-Auraris, and marked out the camp for his master between the Mahometan town and the church of Ledeta, on the very spot where Michael had encamped after his late return from Tigre; Coque Abou Barea encamped from Ledeta to Koscam; Aylo and Ayabdar on the other side of the Kahha, in a line passing by Kedus Raphael, the Abuna's house at the foot of the mountain, above Debra Berhan; Ayto Tesfos in the valley below, by the side of the Angrab: on the road from Woggora to Gondar, and all along the Angrab, till it joined the Kahha, and Kasmati Gusho's camp, were Powussen and the rest of the confederate army; so that by nine o'clock the town was completely invested, as if a wall had been built round it. The water being all in possession of the enemy, centinels were by them placed along the banks of each river, with orders to suffer every towns-

man to fill single jars, such as one man or woman could carry, and to break any supernumerary jars, that might be brought by way of securing a larger provision *. All the people of consequence who had property in and about Gondar, who had fled to Fasil and to the provinces, from fear of Ras Michael when he returned from Tigre, had gone back upon Gusho's word, each man to his own house. Gondar was full of men in arms. In Gusho's and Ayabdar's army, and depending on them, was the property of all Gondar. Ras Woodage, Gusho's father, and brother to Ayabdar, had been Ras in Yasous' time, till he died, universally beloved and regretted; Ayto Engedan and Aylo, sons of Kasmati Eshte, (by a sister of king Yasous) had the property of near one half of the town. Though Engedan was prisoner, and Aylo had married Ras Michael's daughter, they were by interest and inclination united to Gusho, and had served Michael only through fear, from attachment to the king, so that Gusho and Ayabdar were the only citizens in whom the inhabitants of Gondar confided. Powussen, and the rest, were looked upon as free-booters in their inclinations, at least by the townsmen; very little better than Michael, or his troops of Tigre.

From the moment the town was invested, and, indeed, in the field, before Gusho had taken the lead, and though neither Ayabdar nor Powussen were his friends, all Gondar was at his command; and in it an army infinitely superior in number and riches, now they had got such a chieftain, to all the Confederates put together, and Michael's army added to them. Gusho, a man of great understanding, born and bred in Gondar, knew this perfectly well, and that he alone

* For extinguishing fire.

was looked up to as the father of his country. He knew, moreover, that he could not ruin Michael so effectually as to lodge him safely in Gondar, amidst a multitude of enemies, and blockade him there before he had time for resources. He, therefore, detached Ayto Tesfos, the very day he arrived before the town, after Darien, Basha of Belessen, whom Ras Michael had sent before him into Woggora, to effect a passage through that province into Tigre by fair means, promises, and presents. Tesfos came up with Darien before he had time to enter upon his commission, and, having beaten and taken him prisoner, raised all Woggora in arms against Michael, so that not a man could longer pass between Tigre and Gondar.

No person from the rebel army had yet entered Gondar. The king's secretary Azage Kyrillos, a relation of Gusho, had gone to his camp the day of his arrival. The same day the kettle-drums were brought to the brink of the Kahha, and a proclamation made, "That all soldiers of the province of Tigre, or who had bore arms under Ras Michael, should, on the morrow before mid-day, bring their arms, offensive and defensive, and deliver them up, on a spot fixed upon near the church of Ledeta, to commissaries appointed for the purpose of receiving them;" with further intimation to the inhabitants of Gondar, "That any arms found in any house in that town, after noon of the day of proclamation, should subject the owner of such house and arms to death, and the house, or houses, to be razed to their foundation."

The first of the Tigre troops, who set an example of this, was Guebra Mascal; he carried down to the place appointed, and surrendered, about 6000 muskets, belonging to the Ras and his family. All the rest of the principal officers followed; for the inhabitants of Gondar were willing inquisitors, so that the whole arms

were delivered before the hour apppointed, and locked up in the church of Ledeta, under a strong guard both without and within the church. The Tigre soldiers, after surrendering their arms, were not suffered to depart, but a space was assigned between Gusho's tent and the town, where they were disposed of that night, and centinels placed upon them, that they might not disperse. This, indeed, was needless; for they were every day surrounded with troops and enemies, so that all their wealth remained with their landlords in Gondar, which home they were not suffered again to enter, a measure which greatly added to Gusho's popularity in the town. A great number of flour sacks were brought down to Gusho's camp; and many mules, loaded therewith, were delivered to the disarmed army, sufficient to carry them by speedy marches to their own country, for which they had orders to set out the next morning.

Kefla Yasous alone, with about 400 men, had shut himself up in the church of Debra Berhan, where there was water, and he had carried in sufficient provisions for several days. He refused, therefore, to surrender upon the general summons; on which Powussen, who was encamped immediately below him, sent an officer to require him to submit, which he not only peremptorily refused, but told the officer, that, unless he instanly retired, he would give orders to fire upon him, as he had a treaty with Gusho, and, till that was ratified by Gusho himself, he would not surrender, nor suffer any other person to approach his post; at any rate, that he did not intend to surrender to a man of Powussen's low birth, however high his present post had raised him, which he no longer acknowledged, being the mere gift of Michael, one complaint against whom was that of levelling and confounding the nobility with their interiors.

Gusho accordingly sent an officer, a man of great character, and a relation of the king, with a confirmation of his promise; whereupon Kella Yasous surrendered, and sent down his soldiers with what arms he pleased to Gusho's camp, carrying the rest privately to his own house, to which he retired that very evening. Kella Yasous was much beloved by the inhabitants of Gondar, though a Tigrain, and, perhaps, in neither party was there a man so universally esteemed. He had done the townsmen often great service, having always stood between Michael and them in those moments of wrath and vengeance when no one else dared to speak. In particular, he had saved the town from burning that morning the Ras had retired with the king to Tigre, when, whether as he said by an apparition of Michael, the archangel, or more probably of the devil, to put the inhabitants of Gondar to the sword, and set the city on fire; a measure that was supported by Nebrit Tecla, and several other leading men among the Tigrains. If the devil can speak true, here surely was one example of it: Gondar that very day had proved fatal to the Ras; and Kella Yasous himself told me, long after Michael was gone, and all was peace, that having visited him that very evening his left, Debra Berhan, Michael had privately upbraided him with having prevented his burning the town, and told him, that his guardian spirit, Saint Michael, the archangel, or the devil, or whatever we may please to call it, had left him, and never appeared to him again since he had passed the river Tacazze on his return to Gondar; and to this he attributed his present misfortunes.

All the king's arms were surrendered with the rest, and Kella Yasous was the only man that remained unsubdued, a distinction due to his superlative merit, and

preserved to him by his enemies themselves in the very heat of conquest.

As for the Ras, he had continued in the house belonging to his office, visited only by some private friends, but had sent Ozoro Esther to the Itaghe's at Koscam, as soon as he entered Gondar. He ate, drank, and slept as usual, and reasoned upon the event that had happened, with great equanimity and seeming indifference. There was no appearance of guard set upon him; but every motion and look were privately, but strictly, watched. The next day, when he heard how ill his disarmed men were treated by the populace, when they were dismissed to Tigre, he burst into tears, and cried out in great agony, "Had I died before this, I had been happy?" He played no more at tharb, by which game formerly he pretended to divine the issue of every affair of consequence, but gave his dreadbeard and men to a private friend, at the same time renouncing his pretended divinations, as discovered and sinful, by the confidence he had placed in them.

The king behaved with the greatest tenderness and composure; he was, indeed, graver than usual, and talked less, but was not at all dejected. Scarcely any body came near him the first day, or even the second, excepting the priests, some of the judges, and old inhabitants of the town, who had taken no part. Some of the priests and monks, as is their custom, used certain liberties, and mixed a considerable degree of impertinence in their conversations, hinting it to doubtful, whether he would remain on the throne, and maintaining it, as on the part of the people, that he had imbibed from Michael a propensity towards cruelty and bloodshed; what, some months ago, no man in Gondar dared to have surmised for his life. These he only answered with a severe look, but said nothing.

One of these speeches being reported to Gusho, not as a complaint from the king, but through a by-stander, who heard it, that nobleman ordered the offender (a priest of Erba Tensa, a church in Woggora) to be stript naked to his waist, and whipt with thongs three times round Aylo Meidan, till his back was bloody, for this violation of the majesty of the sovereign: and this example, which met with the public approbation of all parties, the clergy only excepted, very much lessened that insolence which the king's misfortunes had excited.

He had eaten nothing the first day but a small piece of wheat-loaf, dividing the rest among the few servants that attended him, who had all fared better than he, among their friends in the town, though they did not own it. The second day began in the same style, and lasted till noon, without any appearance of provisions. After the surrender of the arms, however, came great plenty, both from the town and the camp, and so continued ever after; but he ate very sparingly, though he had generally a very good appetite, and ordered the residue to be given to his servants, or the poor about the gates of the palace, many of whom, he said, must starve by the long stay of so large an army. He seemed to be totally forgotten. About three o'clock of the second day came his secretary from Gusho, staid about an hour, and returned immediately; but what had passed I did not hear, at least at that time. There was no alteration in his looks, or behaviour.—He went early to bed, and had not yet changed the clothes in which he came from the camp.

The next day, the unfortunate troops of Tigre, loaded with curses and opprobrious language, pelted with stones and dirt, and a few way-laid and slain for private injuries, were conducted up the hill above Debra Berhan, on the road through Woggora to Tigre by a

guard of horse from Gusho's camp, who protected them with great humanity as far as they were able; but it was out of the power of any force but that of an army to protect them from the enraged populace, over whom they had tyrannized so many years. Arrived at the river Angrab, in the rear of Powussen's army, they were consigned to him, and he delivered them to Ayto Tesfos, who was to escort them across the Tacazze. Many of the mob, however, continued to pursue them even farther; but these were all to a man disarmed, and stript naked, on their return to Gondar, by Tesfos and Powussen's soldiers, who justly judged, that in the like situation they would themselves have met with no better treatment.

While every rank of people was intent upon this spectacle, a body of Galla, belonging to Maitsha, stole privately into the town, and plundered several houses. They came next into the king's palace, and into the presence-chamber, where he was sitting alone in an alcove, whilst, just by his side, but out of sight, and without the alcove, I and two of his servants were sitting on the floor. This room, in the time of Yasous and the Iteghe (the days of luxury and splendour of the Abyssinian court), had been magnificently hung with mirrors, brought at great expence from Venice, by way of Arabia and the Red Sea; these were very neatly fixed in copper-gilt frames by some Greek filligrane workers from Cairo; but the mirrors were now mostly broken by various accidents, especially when the palace was set on fire, in Joas's time, upon Michael's coming from the campaign of Begemder. These savages, though they certainly saw the king at the other end of the room, attached themselves to the glass nearest the door, which was a large oblong one; and after they had made many grimaces, and a variety of antics before it, one of

them struck it just in the middle, with the butt-end of his lance, and broke it to shivers, which fell tinkling on the floor. Some of these pieces they took up, but in the end they were mostly reduced to powder, with the repeated strokes of their lances. There were three glasses in the alcove where the king sat, as also one in the wings on each side, without the alcove; under the king's right hand we three were sitting, and the Galla were engaged with a mirror near the door, at the other end of the room, on the left side, so that there was but one glass more to break before they arrived at those in the alcove, where the king was sitting.

I was in great fear of the consequences, as they were about thirteen or fourteen in number; nor did we know how many more of their companions might be below, or in the town, or of what party they were, nor whether resistance on our part was lawful. We three had no arms but a short knife at our girdle, nor had the king any; so that we were in the greatest fear that, if their humour of breaking the glasses had continued when they came near the king, he would strike one of them, and we should be all massacred: We all three, therefore, got up and stood before the king, who made a gentle motion with his hand, as if to say, "Stay a little," or, "Have patience." At this instant, Tensa Christos (a man of considerable authority in Gondar, who was understood by Gusho to be trusted with the care of the town, though he had no name or post, for there was yet no form of government settled), hearing the Galla had plundered the houses, and gone into the palace, followed them as fast as possible, with about a hundred stout young men belonging to Gondar, well armed. The Galla soon saw there was a more serious occupation awaiting them, and ran out to the great hall of the king's chamber, called Aderasha, when one of these soldiers

of Gondar shut the door of the room where the king sat. The Galla at first made a shew of resistance; but two of them being very much wounded, and seeing themselves in a house where they did not know their way, and all assistance from their comrades impossible, they surrendered their arms; they then were tied two and two, and sent in this manner down to Gusho's camp, who immediately ordered two of them to be hanged, and the rest to be whipt and dismissed.

Tensa Christos, after having done this good service, came into the room to the king, and kissed the ground in the usual manner before him. The king immediately ordered him to rise, gave him his hands to kiss, and then permitted him to withdraw, without having said one word in his commendation for having delivered him from so great a danger. That same day, a little after noon, a party of soldiers was sent into the town, who apprehended Shalaka Becro, and his son; Nebrit Tecla, and his two sons; two sons of Lika Netcho a priest, and another man, whose name I have forgot; in all eight persons, natives of the province of Tigre, dependants and servants of Ras Michael, and murderers of the late king Joas. These being brought to the market-place, were delivered into the hands of the Edjow Galla, formerly Joas's guard. Becro and his son were hewn to pieces with knives; Nebrit Tecla's sons, the eldest first, and then the youngest, were thrust through with lances; and their father being then brought to them where they lay, and desired to say if he knew who they were, and answering in the negative, he was immediately cut to pieces, as were the others, with great circumstances of cruelty, and their mangled bodies thrown about the streets. These were all the executions which followed this great and sudden revolution; a proof of very exemplary moderation in the conquerors, considering the number of people con-

cerned in the parricide first, and the consequential rebellion after. Lika Netcho, in particular, fully as guilty as his sons, was nevertheless spared, because he had married one of the king's relations.

As yet none of the chiefs of the rebels had entered Gondar. Messages had passed, but not frequently, between the king and Gusho; fewer still between him and Powussen; as for the rest, they seemed to take no lead at all.

On the first of June, Gusho and Powussen came both to the house of the Ras, where they interrogated him very roughly as to all his past conduct. Till the execution of Joas's murderers, he had constantly dressed himself in his very best apparel, with all the insignia of command. As soon as this was told him, he clothed himself plainly, and constantly in white, with a cowl of the same colour on his head, like the monks, a sign he had retired from the world. It seemed as if this was done through a fondness for life, for by that act he devoted the remainder of his days to obscurity and penitence. Nothing remarkable happened at this interview, at least as far as was known. From thence Gusho and Powussen went to the king's palace, where they did homage, and took the oaths of allegiance.

It was there resolved that Gusho should be Ras, and the other places were all disposed of. From this time forward the king began to have a shew of government, no party having testified any sort of discontent with him; on the contrary, each of the rebel chiefs now waited upon him separately, and had long conferences with him; but, what bade fairest to re-establish his authority entirely, was the dissensions that evidently reigned among the leaders of the rebels themselves, whom we, however, shall no longer consider as such, not because their treason had prospered, but because they were now returned to their duty. It

was strongly suspected that a treaty was on foot between Gusho and Michael, by which the latter, in consideration of a large sum, was to put the former again in possession of the province of Tigre; others again said, that Kefla Yasous, at Ras Michael's desire, was to be made governor of Tigre, and to have a large sum of gold, which Michael was supposed to have concealed there, and which he was to remit to Gusho, whilst he and Michael were to understand each other about the government of the province.

Be that as it may, Powussen, on the 4th of June, without any previous notice given to Gusho, marched into Gondar with a thousand horse, and, without further ceremony, ordered Ras Michael to be placed upon a mule, and, joining the rest of his army, who had all struck their tents, marched away so suddenly to Begemder, that Ozoro Esther, then residing at the queen her mother's house at Koscam, had scarcely time to send her old husband a fresh mule, and some supply of necessary provisions *. All the rest of the troops decamped immediately after, the rains beginning now to be pretty constant, and the soldiers desirous to be at home. Some of the great men, indeed, remained at Gondar, such as Ayabdar, Engedan, and others, who had views of preferment. Gusho took possession of the Ras's house and office; the king's officers and servants returned to the palace; the places of those that had fallen in battle were filled, and the whole town began to resume an appearance of peace, which every one, who considered, feared would be of a very short duration.

A few days after the army of Begemder had left Gondar, Powussen sent the usurper Socinios, loaded

* The date of this transaction, as stated here differs from that in the Journal, which see Vol. VII. No. I. of the Appendix to Books VII. and VIII.

with irons, from Agar Salam, a small town in Begemder, where he had been kept prisoner. He was brought before the king in the same equipage he arrived; and being interrogated who he was, answered, with great boldness, that he was Socinios, son to king Yasous, son of Bacuffa; that he had not sought to be made king, but was forced by the Iteghe, and Sanuda; this every one knew to be true. Soon after his mother was examined; but denying now what she had formerly sworn, that she ever had any intimate connection with the late king Yasous, Socinios was sentenced to death; but being in his manners, figure, and conversation, perfectly despicable, the king directed he should serve as a slave in his kitchen, whence he was taken, some time afterwards, and hanged for theft.

On the 21st of June, the Iteghe arrived from Gojam, and all the people of Gondar flocked to see her without the town. Gusho had met her at Tedda; and, at the same time that he welcomed her, told her, as from the king, that it was his orders that neither Palambaras Mammo, nor Ligaba Beecho, were to enter the town with her. This she considered as a very high affront, and the work of Gusho, not the king's orders. She upbraided Gusho with avarice, pride, and malice, declared him a greater tyrant than Michael, without his capacity, forbidding him to appear any more before her, and with great difficulty could be prevailed with to go on to Koscam, instead of returning to Gojam. It is impossible to conceive the enthusiasm with which the sight of the old queen inspired all sorts of people. Gusho had no troops; the king as few, being left without a servant in his palace. Then was the season for mischief, had not Fasil been hovering with his army, without declaring his approbation

or disapprobation of any thing that had been done, or was doing.

About the end of June he came at once to Abba Samuel, without announcing himself before hand, according to his usual custom, and he paid his first visit to the Iteghe, then a short one to the king, where I saw him: he was very facetious with me, and pretended I had promised him my horse when I returned from Maitsha, which I excused, by observing the horse was out of town. "Well, well," says he, "that shall not save you; tell me where he is and I will send for him, and give you the best mule in the army in exchange, and take my chance of recovering him wherever he is." "With all my heart," replied I; "you will find him perhaps in the valley of Serbraxos, at the foot of the hill opposite to the south ford of the river Mariam." He laughed heartily at this, shook me by the hand at parting, saying, "Well, well, for all this you shall not want your mule."

The king was exceedingly pleased at what had passed, and said, "I wish you would tell me, Yagoube, how you reconcile all these people to you. It is a secret which will be of much more importance to me than to you. There is Gusho, now, for example, so proud of his present fortune, that he scarcely will say a civil word to me; and Fasil has brought me a list of his own servants, whom he wants to make mine without asking my leave, (Adera Tacca Georgis, whom he named to be Fit-Auraris to the king, as he had done formerly when he wanted to quarrel with Socinios, Gubena to be Cantiba, and some others), yet he never sees you come into the room but he begins immediately joking and pleasant conversation."

After these appointments, which were not disputed with him, though otherwise very much against the

king's inclination, Fasil retired with his army to Maitsha.

In the meantime, Gusho set every thing to sale, content with the money the offices produced, and what he could squeeze from people who had crimes, real or alleged, to compound for. He did not perceive that steps were taking by his enemies, which would soon deprive him of all the advantages he enjoyed. Instead of attending to this, he amused himself with mortifying the Iteghe, whose daughter, Welleta Israel, he had formerly married, but who had long left him by the persuasion of her mother. He thought it was an affront to his dignity that the king had pardoned Ligaba Beecho, and Palambaras Mammo, the very day after he had forbid them to enter the town; and, what was still stronger, that the king, without his consent, had sent an invitation to the Iteghe to return to Gondar, and govern, as his mother, to the extent she did in the time of Joas; he resolved therefore to attempt the creating a misunderstanding between the king and queen, a matter not very difficult in itself to bring about.

Gusho had confiscated, in the name of the king, all the queen's villages, which made her believe that this offer of the king, to bring her to Gondar, was an insidious one. In order to make the breach the wider, he had also prevailed upon the king's mother to come to Gondar, and insist with her son to be crowned, and take the title and state of Iteghe. The king was prevailed upon to gratify his mother, under pretence that the Iteghe had refused to come upon his invitation; but this, as it was a pretence only, so it was expressly a violation of the law of the land, which permits but one Iteghe, and never allows the nomination of a new one while the former is in life, however distant a relation she may be to the then reigning king. In con-

sequence of this new coronation, two large villages, Tshemmera and Tocoussa, which belonged to the Iteghe as appendages of her royalty, of course devolved upon the king's own mother, newly crowned, who sending her people to take possession, the inhabitants not only refused to admit her officers, but forcibly drove them away, declaring they would acknowledge no other mistress but their old one, to whom they were bound by the laws of the land.

If Gusho, in this manner, dealt hardly with the queen, his behaviour to the king was neither more just nor generous: he had not only failed to advance any gold for the king's subsistence, but had intercepted that part of his revenue which he knew was ready to be paid him, and in the hands of others of his subjects. A stated daily allowance was, indeed, delivered to the king in kind, for the maintenance of his household, but even this was smaller than had been settled by Ras Michael; besides which, 120 jars of honey being one day sent the king from Damont, and at the same time 1000 cotton coats from Walkayt, both these were seized upon by Gusho, without any part being offered to the king, who thereupon determined to break with him, as did the Iteghe from the former provocation.

Ayabdar, never reconciled to him before the battle of Serbraxos, had fresh reason of difference with him from an unequal distribution of Ras Michael's effects, while Engedan, who had been promised the province of Kuara, and whom the king very much favoured, solicited that post in vain, unless he would advance a thousand ounces of gold, which he positively refused to do. The king fomented all these complaints by sending a person of consequence to Powussen, who advised him to arrest Gusho immediately, and promised, if resistance was made, to be at Gondar in three

days. Engedan and Ayabdar were trusted with the execution of this; but as Gusho was beloved by the people of Gondar, the secret was not so well kept but that it came to his ears.

On the 16th of July (the feast of St Michael), Gusho pretended he had made a vow to visit the church of that Saint at Azazo; and accordingly, early in the morning, he set out for that village, attended with thirty horse and fifty musketeers; but no sooner had he passed the church than his real intention appeared, and he was pursued by Gubeno, Cantiba of Dembea; Ayto Adigo, Palambaras; and Ayto Engedan. Gubeno alone, being hearty in the cause, came up with him first, as they had passed the river Derma, when Gusho, seeing Gubeno's troops close behind him, turned quickly upon them, repassed the river, and, having killed two of the foremost with his own hand, and repelled the rest, he returned across the river, and faced about upon the banks of it. Upon the other troops coming up, he called to Engedan, putting him in mind how lately he had been in his hands, and advising them all to return to Gondar, and tell the king he should again be with him in fifteen days.

A council was thereupon held; and as it was plain, from the countenance of the man, that he was resolved to resist to the utmost, none of the leaders then present thought themselves warranted to risk the death of a person so noble*, and so powerfully related, especially in an obscure skirmish, such as was then likely to happen, the motives for which were not publicly known; they accordingly all returned to Gondar, leaving the Ras to pursue his way, who being now advanced as far as Degwassa, and thinking himself

* Gusho was the son of Woodage, grandson by a daughter of Yamanaxos, brother of Susneus I. or Melek Seged.—E.

out of all danger, was suddenly surrounded by Aclog, governor of a little district there; and even from him he would have escaped by his own courage and exertion, had not his horse sunk in miry ground, whence he could not recover him. After receiving these news, the king sent his Fit-Auraris, Adera Tacca Georgis, and Ayto Engedan, with a number of troops, to bring Gusho to town, when he returned a miserable figure, with his head shaven: he was clothed in black, and was confined that same day (the first of August) a close prisoner, and in irons, in a high, damp, uninhabited tower of the king's house, without being pitied by either party.

It was now the season of the year when this country used to overflow with milk and honey; because, being in all the low part of it covered with rain, the horsemen and soldiers, who used to obstruct the roads, were all retired to quarters, and the peasants, bringing provisions to the market, passed the high grounds in safety. All sorts of people, profiting by the plenty which this occasioned, indulged themselves to the greatest excess in every sort of pleasure to which their respective appetites led them. The rains had fallen, indeed, as usual, but had not, however, stopped the march of the armies, and if not a famine, at least a scarcity of provisions in Gondar, had been the consequence; not a word was heard, indeed, of Ras Michael, whether he was alive or dead; * but his familiar spirits seemed to preside in the air, and pour down mischief.

* The Râs was not dead, but alive and meditating evil. He was carried off by Powussen, who had formed the bold resolution of reinstating him in Tigré, making him his ally, and so confirming himself in spite of Gusho and Fasil in the province of Begemder. Powussen enjoyed that province till his death. Michael governed Tigré till his decease in 1780. The king reigned eight years and was then deposed. See Valentia's Travels, Volume III.

CHAP. XI.

The Author obtains Liberty to return Home—Takes Leave of the Iteghe at Koscam—Last interview with the Monks.

SINCE the queen came again to Koscam, I had passed a great part of my time there; but my health declining every day, I had obtained, with great difficulty, liberty from her to attempt my return home. The king, too, after a hundred exceptions and provisos, had at length been brought to give an unwilling consent. I had seen also Metical Aga's servant, who, upon finding Ras Michael was disgraced, would not stay, but hasted back, and would fain have prevailed upon me to return with him through Tigre into Arabia. But besides that I was determined to attempt completing my journey through Sennaar and the desert, I by no means liked the risk of passing again through Masuah, to experience a second time the brutal manners of the Naybe and garrison of that place.

Captain Thomas Price, of the Lion of Bombay, had been obliged, by his business with the government of Mecca, to continue at Jidda till the season after I went from thence to Abyssinia. I had already heard once from him, and now a second time. He informed me

my countrymen had been in the greatest pain for me; that several reports had been current, both at Jidda and Mocha, of my having been assassinated; sometimes it was said by the Naybe of Masuah; sometimes that it had happened at Gondar; by others at Sennaar, in my return home. Captain Price wrote me this last letter, that, thinking I must be distressed for want of money, he had left orders with Ibrahim Seraff, the English broker at Jidda, to advance me 1000 crowns, desiring my draft to be sent to Ibrahim, directed to him or his brother at Bombay, and to make it payable to a gentleman of that name who lived in Smithfield. I cannot omit mentioning these instances of the philanthropy and generosity of Mr Price, to whom I bore no relation, and who was but a common acquaintance, whom I had acquired among my countrymen during my stay at Jidda. The only title I had to this consideration was, that he thought I was probably in distress, and that as it was in his power alone to relieve me, this in itself, to a noble mind, constituted a sufficient obligation. I do not believe Captain Price was able to read a word of Latin; so that sentiment in Terence, "Homo sum, nihil humani mihi alienum esse puto," was as much an original in Mr Price's breast as if it had never before been uttered.

I told Metical Aga's servant the bad news I had got from Sennaar, and he agreed perfectly with the contents, adding, that the journey was not practicable; he declared they were so inhuman and so barbarous a race, that he would not attempt the journey, Mahometan as he was, for half the Indies. I begged him to say no more on that head, but to procure from his master, Metical Aga at Mecca, a letter to any man of consequence he knew at Sennaar.

My resolution being therefore taken, and leave obtained, this will be now the place to resume the account of my finances. I have already gone so far as to mention three hundred pounds which I had occasionally borrowed from a Greek, whose name was Petros. This man was originally a native of the island of Rhodes, which he must have left early, for he was not at this time much past thirty; he had been by trade a shoemaker. For what reason he left his own country I know not; but he was of a very pleasing figure and address, though very timid. Joas and the Ireghe very much distinguished him, and the king had made him Azeleffa el Camisha, which answers precisely to groom of the stole, or first lord of the bed-chamber, in England. Being pliant, civil, and artful, and always well-dressed, he had gained the good graces of the whole court; he was also rich, as the king was generous, and his perquisites not inconsiderable.

After the campaign of Mariam Barea, when the dwarf was shot who was standing before Ras Michael, and the palace set on fire in the fray which followed, the crown, which was under Petros's charge, was melted; the gold, indeed, that it consisted of, was afterwards found, but there was said to have been on the top of it a pearl, or jewel, of immense price and size, larger than a pigeon's egg; and this, whatever it was, had disappeared, being in all probability consumed by the fire. Ras Michael, on the contrary, believed that it had been taken out by Petros, with a view to sell it; and for this reason he had constantly refused him liberty to leave Abyssinia, and had kept him always in fear that some day or other he would strip him of all that he had saved. While Michael was besieging the mountain Haramat, Petros beseeched me to take 300l. of him, and give him my first, second,

and third bill of exchange upon Messrs Julian and Rosa, my correspondents at Cairo, payable a month after sight, to the Maronite Bishop of Mount Sinai, after which he set out for his own country, *in forma pauperis*, and thereby escaped the rapacity of both Ras Michael and the Naybe of Masuah. As for the bill, it came duly to hand, and was paid to the bishop, who would very fain have received for each of the duplicates, and was near being bastinadoed for insisting upon this before the Bey at Cairo.

A bill drawn from Gondar is a very great curiosity when arrived in London; it should be now upon the file in the shop of my very worthy and honourable friends, the Messrs Drummond and Company at Charing Cross. It was the only piece of writing of any kind which found its way to its intended destination, though many had been written by me on different occasions which presented for Arabia; so that I will recommend to all travellers, for the future, to tack bills of exchange to their letters of greatest consequence, as a sure method of preventing their miscarriage.

I had made a show, and with some degree of ostentation, of sending my gold chain to Cairo by the hands of Metical Aga's servant; declaring always that it was the only piece of Abyssinian gold I should carry out of the country, which I was to leave, both in fact and appearance, a pauper. Mules are the only beasts for carriage commonly used in Abyssinia, though bulls and cows, of a particular kind, are bought for the purpose by carriers, merchants, and such like, in that country, especially near the mines or quarries of salt; they are very slow, however, and capable of no great burden, though very easily maintained. I had abundance of mules of my own for carrying my instruments and baggage, and the king and Iteghe furnished me with others for my own riding. I had, besides, two

favourite horses, which I intended to attempt to carry home, foolishly enough; for though I thought in my own mind that I was sufficiently informed of, and prepared for, all sorts of hardships, I had not foreseen the hundredth part of the difficulties and dangers that were then awaiting me.

On the 6th of August messengers came from Fasil, and the day after from Powussen, Begemder, Gojam, Damot, and Maitsha, which provinces, by their deputies, desired that Gusho might be set at liberty. This the king agreed to, but upon condition that the Ras should instantly pay him 1000 ounces of gold, and 500 muskets, which, on the other side, was as positively refused. Upon this Gusho was put into close confinement, and heavier irons than before: and, what was the most unjust, his two sons, who had left their own country to assist their father in distress, were confined in chains with him. All these violent measures were attributed to Ayabdar, Billetana Gueta Tecla, Guebra Mascal, and Basha Hezekias, officers connected with Ras Michael, whom the king had permitted to return from Tigre, and very much confided in their councils.

On the other hand, Adera Tacca Georgis (the king's Fit-Auraris), and Guebra Welleta Yasous, principal people in Maitsha, and whom Fasil had put about the king, desired leave to retire to their own country, from which it is probable they will never again return to Gondar, unless as enemies.

Although the king still obstinately insisted that the Ras should pay him his thousand ounces of gold, and five hundred muskets, as a price for his being set at liberty, this was refused by Gusho, in terms that shewed he was not now, as formerly, afraid of the king's power. On the other hand, the king proclaimed Kefla Yasous governor of the province of Tigre, with

the same extent of command as Ras Michael had enjoyed it; and he was already there, and had taken upon him the government of that province. At the same time the king superseded Gusho, and deprived him of his province of Amhara, which was given to his nephew Ayto Adigo, son of Palamoaras Durrie, a man of very great interest and property in the province; after which he immediately left Gondar, and took his way through Begemder; but at the very entrance into Amhara, he was defeated by a son of Gusho who was expecting him; his troops were dispersed, and his brother, Ayto Aderesson (the man who lost Gusho's horse at the battle of Tedda), wounded and taken prisoner.

There remained no longer any doubt that, as soon as the rains were over, the former scenes of bloodshed and confusion were to be acted over again; for, by appointing Kefla Yasous to the government of Tigre *, and Ayto Adigo to that of Amhara, and the peaceable passage given to this young nobleman through Begemder, in order to supplant his uncle Gusho, by the great confidence shewn by the king in the old officers and relations of Ras Michael, now at Gondar, and the dismission of Fasil's friends (Adera Tacca Georgis, and Confu Adam), the most ample confession possible was made, that the king had again thrown himself into the arms of the province of Tigre and Begemder united, to which Amhara was to be added, by keeping Gusho prisoner, till such time as his nephew Adigo could gain entire possession.

To counterpoise this, a messenger arrived from Fa-

* This appointment was related to Mr Salt when in Habbesh in 1805; it occasioned the death of Kefla Yasous, who was cruelly murdered by Ras Michael soon after.—E.

sil, demanding privately of the king, that Gusho should be set at liberty, and return to his province of Amhara; that Lika Netcho, one of the murderers of Joas (who had been spared, as being married to a relation of the king), should be immediately put to death, and that all the officers belonging to Ras Michael, then at court, should be banished for ever to Tigre, their native country. The king returned a positive refusal, not qualified in any shape whatever.

A disagreement now happened, which, more than all the rest, was interesting, and disturbed me in particular. Positive information was brought to the Iteghe, and, I believe, very authentic, that the king, weary of the many councils held at Koscam, by the servants and deputies of the several parties, in the queen's presence (to which he was not called), had determined to give up the palace of Koscam, in which it was thought there were great riches, to be plundered by his soldiers. As the death of the queen, by her confinement in some distant desert and unwholesome convent, must have probably been the consequence of success on one part, so an immediate revolution, and the death of the king, was certainly to follow the miscarriage on the other, that is, should he be defeated in, or after making the attempt.

Troops, headed by Engedan, Ayto Confu, and by Mammo, and all the Iteghe's relations, now crowded into Koscam, into which great plenty of provisions was also carried. The wall was high and strong, the gates lately put into good repair, the tower, or castle, within, in perfect good order; the Iteghe had not surrendered her fire-arms, and all the inhabitants around, especially the poorer sort, were firmly attached to her, as in times of distress and famine her charity afforded them a constant refuge.

Since the Iteghe had returned, I always lived at Koscam by her own desire, as her health was very precarious since her residence in Gojam. This suited my intention of withdrawing privately, and, therefore, not to multiply the number of leave-takings, I had seen Gusho but once, and that for a moment, and Ayabdar not at all, so that my whole attendance was now between the king and queen. The king had denied publicly his intention of plundering Koscam, but in a manner not at all satisfactory to the Iteghe; I ventured therefore to mention it to him one day when he was alone, on which he said, "I would not do it for your sake, Yagoube, were there no other reason; but my mother (meaning the Iteghe) is ill-advised, and worse informed."

On the 13th of October, Powussen, with a very considerable army, and without any previous intimation, arrived at Koscam, his head-quarters all the last campaign. He continued there till the 22d of the same month, and then decamped, passing by Gondar, without entering it; he came to Ras Gusho's house, under the hill of Koscam, where he had several interviews with the king and Iteghe, to what purport was never known; but it probably was to endeavour some reconcilement between the king and queen; and this was effected a few days afterwards (at least in appearance) by Ayabdar, and some of the great men at Gondar, after which Powussen returned to Begemder. For my part, I neither desired nor obtained an interview; I saw that the storm was ready to break, and I was taking the most speedy and effectual way to be out of the sphere of its action.

On the 12th of November, all Gondar was struck with a panic at the news brought in by the peasants from the country, flying for refuge to the capital, destitute of every thing, and thankful only they had es-

caped with life. Fasil had marched with a considerable army from Ibaba, and advanced to Dingleber in peace, when he left the main body, under the conduct of Welleta Yasous, and all his baggage, considering that place as the limits of his government. He marched from this, without taking for himself two changes of raiment, at the head of 700 horse, the most wild and desperate banditti that ever were introduced into any unfortunate country. With these he burnt every village and every church between Dingleber, and Sar-Ohha; murdered every male, without distinction of priest or layman; killed every woman past the age of child-bearing, and gave the others as slaves to the wild Pagan Galla whom he had with him. In short, he just indulged that body of men in the same enormities that they themselves exercise in the inroads they make into countries, unhappy enough to be their neighbours in time of war. The whole country of Degwassa, the district which Aclog commanded, was totally destroyed; men, women, and children, were entirely extirpated, without distinction of age or sex; the houses all razed to the ground, and the country about it left as desolate as after the deluge. The villages belonging to the king were as severely treated; an universal cry was heard from every part, but no one dared to suggest any means of help; parties were so entirely mixed and confounded, that no one could safely enter into any confidence with his neighbour; but the common people, who had little to lose, began again to cry out for the return and government of Ras Michael.

Fasil, having given the king this sample of what he was capable of doing, halted at Sar-Ohha, and from thence sent a peremptory demand that Gusho should be at liberty. His messenger was a crooked, diminu-

tive dwarf, called Dohho, of whom I have already spoken. It was a very bad sign of a treaty when such a one was the manager. He upbraided the king in terms scarcely decent, with the protection, life, and kingdom the Ras Fasil had given him, when the contrary was absolutely in his power. He asked the king if he knew who had protected him the night of the retreat from the hill of Serbraxos, and told him, in plain terms, that being entirely void of the noble principle of gratitude himself, he had forced him, Fasil, to be wanting in the next great virtue, that of hospitality, in suffering a man of Gusho's quality to be made prisoner, after arriving within the limits of his government. He concluded, by telling the king plainly, that, unless he restored Gusho to his liberty and government, without condition, he would, in three days, make Gondar, the metropolis, as desert and destitute of inhabitants, as he had left the paltry district of Degwassa.

The king received all this with great composure; for he had as much fortitude, and as little fear as ever fell to the share of any man; his misfortune, however, was, that he had no resources in which he could trust; and the Tigre officers about him, more imprudent, and fully as fearless as he, gave him the same advices they would have done had he been at the head of the army. Ras Michael was, moreover, gone, and Kefla Yasous was at a distance; these two were the men for planning and contriving business, and who saved others the trouble of thinking. The rest, such as Billetana Gueta Tecla, Guebra Mascal, and Basha Hezekias, were only fit to be trusted with execution, and to proceed according to the letter of the orders they might receive, and the consequences of which they could not, nor did they wish to understand. By

being used, however, to constant success in executing plans maturely digested by wiser heads, they had acquired a degree of presumption which made them very dangerous counsellors to a young king, in the present case, where nothing but the greatest prudence, assisted by the manifest interposition of the hand of Heaven (many examples of which he had already proved) could save him from perdition.

I was not present at the audience, being at Koscam; but his secretary, to whom I am indebted for every thing that passed in private, in this history, and which otherwise was beyond the reach of my knowledge, assured me the king answered these threatenings without any change of countenance or language, and in very few words: "Tell Kasmati Fasil from me, that what I am obliged to do by the rules of justice, is not to be measured either by his inclination or power to do wrong. Men have crucified their Saviour; and many kings in this country (better men than I am) have been, in various manners, slain by their deluded subjects. The race of Solomon, however, God has preserved till this day on the throne, where I am now sitting, while nothing but the memory of those who oppressed them remains, loaded with the curses of mankind. I am king of this country, and have often been acknowledged as such by Kasmati Fasil. I will not give up Gusho, but at my own time, if ever; nor can he insist upon it, consistently with the duty of a subject to his sovereign." Noble words these, had he been at the head of an army to enforce them.

This message was quickly conveyed to Fasil, who was advanced to Azazo, where it met him, and he continued his march without halting, till he came to Abba Samuel, about two miles from Gondar. It was on the 13th of November that his army made a shew of encamping at Abba Samuel, for there was not above

six tents pitched, and next day, the 14th, by eight in the morning, a drum and trumpet, guarded by about a hundred horse, came immediately under the town to the banks of the river Kahha, where the trumpet having sounded three times, and the kettle-drum beat as often, it was proclaimed, "That all manner of persons, of what degree soever, whether servants of the palace, or others, should instantly leave Gondar as they regarded their lives; and if any staid after this warning, their blood should be upon their own head." The whole town, therefore, in an instant was deserted, and very few, even of his own servants, remained with the king. I had already once partaken of a similar scene, and found it of the most disagreeable kind; Providence spared me, however, this repetition of it, as I was at Koscam, and determined to be retired there so perfectly, that I did not stir out of my apartment till night, when the gates were locked, and the guards placed.

On the 15th, the king released Ras Gusho from his confinement, who immediately went to the camp to Fasil; and next day, at night, he returned, and had an audience at the palace with the king, and again retired to sleep at Abba Samuel. On the 17th, a little before noon, Fasil came to the palace for an audience, but first took possession of every avenue leading to it; a strong guard was also placed in the antichamber, and the charge of the door of the king's presence-chamber was taken from the king's ordinary black servants, and given to Confu Adam, who mounted guard there with about twenty wild Galla. What further passed I did not strictly inquire, being exceedingly distressed, by the bad prospect that presented itself, and firmly resolved to take no further part. In general, however, I understood, that all was humiliation; and Fasil having announced to the king that he

had given his daughter to Gusho in marriage, to him the king gave Gojam, and restored the province of Amhara. Aclog was condemned to find security for 1200 ounces of gold, which was said to be the sum Gusho had with him when taken.

The king was to restore to the Iteghe the whole of her villages that she had ever enjoyed, from the time of Bacuffa, her husband, to that present moment. To Fasil, were given Damot, Maitsha, and Agow, and to Confu Adam, Ibaba Azage; and, for the greater solemnity, the king and Fasil took a formal oath, to ratify all these articles, and to remain in friendship for ever. After which, the Abuna, in pontificals, being called to be present, pronounced a formal curse and sentence of excommunication, upon whichever of the parties should first break the vow they had taken.

No word was mentioned of Tigre, or Kefla Yasous, or of Powussen, nor the smallest notice taken of Ras Ayabdar, who remained in his house and office, as if he had not existed. It appeared to me the party was again made by one half of the kingdom against the other; Kefla Yasous and Powussen against Fasil and Gusho; as for Ayabdar and Ayto Tesfos of Samen, these were left, contemptuously *in medio*, to take any side they pleased, which, indeed, was of no consequence. After this interview, Fasil never again entered the king's house, though he went often to Koscam; but I neither saw him, nor sought to see him, nor did he ever inquire after me, as far as I could learn.

On the 19th of November Fasil sent orders to the palace, that four bodies of the king's household-troops, Gimja Bet, Werk Sacala, Ambasele, and Edjow, should immediately join him, which they did, to the number of 1200 men, all armed. These he carried, with Gusho his son-in-law, in triumph to Damot; nor was this the only instance Fasil gave of the great re-

gard he had to his late oaths, and to the sacred character of the person that administered them; for the morning he marched off, a party of the Galla, meeting the Abuna, and a numerous retinue mounted on mules, going to the king's house, obliged them all to dismount at once, without distinction, taking their mules with them to the camp, from whence they never returned, and leaving the Abuna on foot, to find his way back to his house, at Kedus Raphael; from the top of which, as from a castle, he wisely poured out his excommunications, against an army, composed entirely of Pagans, without one Christian among them.

It is here a proper period to finish the history of Abyssinia; as I was no further present at, or informed of, the public transactions which followed. My whole attention was now taken up in preparations for my return through the kingdom of Sennaar and the desert. Neither shall I take up the reader's time with a long narrative of leave-taking, or what passed between me and those illustrious personages with whom I had lived so long in the most perfect and cordial friendship. Men of little and envious minds would perhaps think I was composing a panegyric upon myself, from which, therefore, I most willingly refrain. But the several marks of goodness, friendship, and esteem, which I received at parting, are confined within my own breast, where they never shall be effaced, but continue to furnish me with the most agreeable reflections, since they were the fruit alone of personal merit, and of honest, steady, and upright behaviour. All who had attempted the same journey hitherto had met with disappointment, disgrace, or death; for my part, although I underwent every sort of toil, danger, and all manner of hardship, yet these were not confined to myself. I suffered always honourably, and in common with the rest of the state; and when sun-shiny days happened

(for sun-shiny days there were, and very brilliant ones too), of these I was permitted freely to partake; and the most distinguished characters, both at court and in the army, were always ready to contribute, as far as possible, to promote what they thought or saw was the object of my pursuits or entertainment.

I shall only here mention what passed at the last interview I had with the Iteghe, two days before my departure. Tensa Christos, who was one of the chief priests of Gondar, was a native of Gojam, and consequently of the low church, or a follower of Abba Eustathius, in other words, as great an enemy as possible to the Catholic, or, as they call it, *the religion of the Franks*. He was, however, reputed a person of great probity and sanctity of manners, and had been, on all occasions rather civil and friendly to me when we met, though evidently not desirous of any intimate connections or friendship; and as I, on my part, expected little advantage from connecting myself with a man of his principles, I very willingly kept at all possible distance; that I might run no risk of disobliging him was my only aim.

This priest came often to the Iteghe's and Ayto Aylo's, with both of whom he was much in favour, and here I now happened to meet him, when I was taking my leave in the evening. "I beg of you," says he, "Yagoube, as a favour, to tell me, now you are immediately going away from this country, and you can answer me without fear, Are you really a Frank, or are you not?" "Sir," said I, "I do not know what you mean by fear; I should as little decline answering you any question you have to ask had I ten years to stay, as now I am to quit this country tomorrow: I came recommended, and was well received by the King and Ras Michael: I neither taught

nor preached; no man ever heard me say a word about my particular mode of worship; and as often as my duty has called me, I have never failed to attend divine service as it is established in this country. What is the ground of fear that I should have, while under the king's protection, and when I conform in every shape to the laws, religion, and customs of Abyssinia?" "True," says Tensa Christos, "I do not say you should be alarmed; whatever your faith is, I would defend you myself; the Iteghe knows I always spoke well of you; but will you gratify an old man's curiosity, in telling me whether or not you really are a Frank, Catholic, or Jesuit?"

"I have too great a regard," replied I, "to a request of a man, so truly good and virtuous as you, not to have answered you the question at whatever time you could have asked me; and I do now declare to you, by the word of a Christian, that my countrymen and I are more distant in matters of religion, from these you call Catholics, Jesuits, or Franks, than you and your Abyssinians are; and that a priest of my religion, preaching in any country subject to those Franks, would as certainly be brought to the gallows as if he had committed murder, and just as speedily as you would stone a Catholic priest preaching here in the midst of Gondar. They do precisely by us as you do by them, so they have no reason to complain." "And," says he, "don't you do the same to them?" "No," replied I; "every man in our country is allowed to serve God in his own way; and as long as their teachers confine themselves to what the sacred books have told them, they can teach no ill, and therefore deserve no punishment. No religion, indeed, teaches a man evil; but when, forgetting this, they preach against government, curse the king, absolve

his subjects from allegiance, or incite them to rebellion, as being lawful, the sword of the civil power cuts them off, without any blame falling upon their religion; because these things were done in contradiction to what their priests, from the Scripture, should have taught them were truly the tenets of that very religion."

The Iteghe now interposed: "What do you think, Tensa Christos? If Yagoube is not a priest, should he not be one?" "Madam," says he, "I have one question more to inquire of him, and that shall be all; nor would I ask it if he was not going away to-morrow." "It is an unfair one, then," said I; "but out with it; I cannot suffer in the opinion of good men, by answering directly a question which you put to me out of curiosity." "It seems, then," says he, "you are not a Frank, but you think your own religion a better one than theirs; you are not of our religion, however, for you say we are nearer the Catholics than you; now what objection have you to our religion, and what is your opinion of it?"

"As far as I am informed," said I, "I think well of it; it is the ancient Greek church, under St Athanasius, successor to St Mark, in the chair of Alexandria. This being the case, you cannot have a better, as you have the religion nearest to that of the apostles, and, as I have before said, no religion teaches a man evil, much less can your religion give you such instruction, if you have not corrupted it; and if you have, it is no longer the religion of St Athanasius, or the apostles, therefore liable to error. And now, Tensa Christos, let me ask you two questions; you are in no fear of answering, neither are you in danger, though not about to leave the country. Does your religion permit you to marry one

sister, to divorce her, and marry the other, and then, keeping the aunt, to marry the niece likewise? Does St Athanasius teach you to marry one, two, or three wives, and divorce them as often as you please; to marry others, and then go back to the former again?" "No," replied he. "Then as you do this daily," answered I, "you certainly are not living in this one instance according to the religion of St Athanasius. Now, I ask you, If any priest, truly a Christian, from our parts (not a Frank, but agreeing in every thing else with you), was to preach against this, and some such-like practices, frequently used in Abyssinia, could this priest live amongst you, or how would you treat him?" "Stone him to death," says Ayto Aylo, who was sitting by; "stone him to death like a Frank, or a Jesuit; he should not live a week." "Yagoube is hard upon me," continued Tensa Christos, turning to the Iteghe; "but I am sorry to say, with truth, I fear they never would abandon the flesh pots of Egypt, their ancient inheritance, for the teaching of any priest, however perfect his religion might be, or pure his life, or however corrupt their manners." "Then, Tensa Christos," said I, "do not be over sure but that shedding the blood of those Franks, as you call them, may be criminal in the sight of God. As their religion has so far served them, as to prevent the practice of some horrid crimes, that are common here, yours hath not yet had that effect upon you; if you do not want precept, perhaps you may want example; these Franks are very capable of shewing you this last, and your own religion instructs you to imitate them."

All this time there was not the smallest noise in the room, in which above a hundred people were present; but, as I wished this conversation to go no further, and was afraid of some question about the Virgin

Mary, I got up, and passing to the other side of the room, I stood by Tensa Christos, saying to him, "And now, holy father, I have one, last favour, to ask you, which is your forgivenness, if I have at any time offended you; your blessing, now that I am immediately to depart, if I have it not; and your prayers while on my long and dangerous journey, through countries of Infidels and Pagans."

A hum of applause sounded all throughout the room. The Iteghe said something, but what, I did not hear. Tensa Christos was surprised apparently at my humility, which he had not expected, and cried out, with tears in his eyes, "Is it possible, Yagoube, that you believe my prayers can do you any good?" "I should not be a Christian, as I profess to be, father," replied I, "if I had any doubt of the effect of good men's prayers." So saying, I stooped to kiss his hand, when he laid a small iron cross upon my head, and, to my great surprise, instead of a benediction, repeated the Lord's prayer. I was afraid he would have kept me stooping till he should add the ten commandments likewise, when he concluded, "Gzier y' Baracuc," May God bless you. After which, I made my obeisance to the Iteghe, and immediately withdrew; it not being the custom, at public audience, to salute any one in the presence of the sovereign.

Twenty greasy monks, however, had placed themselves in my way as I went out, that they might have the credit of giving me the blessing likewise after Tensa Christos. As I had very little faith in the prayers of these drones, so I had some reluctance to kiss their greasy hands and sleeves; however, in running this disagreeable gauntlet, I gave them my blessing in English,—Lord send you all a halter, as he did to Abba Salama (meaning the Acab Saat). But they, think-

ing I was recommending them to the patriarch Abba Salama, pronounced at random, with great seeming devotion, their Amen,—So be it *.

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* This humorous adieu closes the history of Abyssinia, and all that we know of its internal state and transactions. No information that can be relied upon respecting the fate of Teclahaimanout, and the events which succeeded it, has arrived in Europe. An Abyssinian told Sir William Jones about twelve years after, that the king was deposed, or killed, and that his brother Tecla Georgis, probably the prince called George in these volumes, had ascended the throne. Michael was fallen; the Tigre party ruined; and the whole government of the kingdom left in the hands of Fasil. After the acquaintance which the reader must have formed with the leading characters in the troubled drama of the Abyssinian politics, it must be regretted that no account can be given, at the distance of thirty-two years, of their subsequent actions, or end.—E.

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

BOOK VIII.

THE AUTHOR RETURNS BY SENNAAR THROUGH NUBIA AND THE GREAT DESERT—ARRIVES AT ALEXANDRIA, AND AFTER AT MARSEILLES.

CHAP. I.

Journey from Gondar to Tcherkin.*

THE palace of Koscam is situated upon the south side of Debra Tzai; the name signifies the Mountain of the Sun. The palace consists of a square tower of three storeys, with a flat parapet roof, or terrace, and battlements about it. The court of guard, or head-quarters of the garrison of Koscam, is kept here; immediately below this is the principal gate, or entrance, towards Gondar. It is surrounded by a high outer-wall, which may have above an English mile of circumference. This outer precinct is all occupied by soldiers, labourers, and out-door servants; within this

* The Journals from the date December 26th, 1771, to the arrival at Cairo, on the 10th of January 1773, are regular as to dates and local descriptions. The printed narrative has been attentively compared with these.—E.

is another large court, inclosed by walls likewise; in this the apartments are but of one storey, appropriated to the principal officers, priests, and servants. In this also is the church, built by the* present Iteghe herself, and reckoned the richest in Abyssinia. They have large crosses of gold for their processions, and kettle-drums of silver. The altar is all covered with gold plates, all the gift of their magnificent patroness. The priests, too, were all rich, till Ras Michael seized, and applied part of their revenue to his own use, and that of the state, and thereby reduced them to a condition much more agreeable to the vows of poverty, which they had made from pride, than was their former one.

The third, or inner court, is reserved for the queen's own apartments, and such of the noble women as are her attendants, that are unmarried, and make up her court. Behind the palace, higher up the hill, are houses of people of quality, chiefly her own relations. Above these the mountain rises very regularly, in form of a cone, covered with herbage to the very top; on the east side is the road from Walkayt; on the west from Kuara, and Ras el Feel; that is, all the low country, or north of Abyssinia, bordering upon the Shangalla, through which lies the road to Sennaar†.

It was the 26th of December, 1771, at one o'clock in the afternoon, that I left Gondar. I had purposed to set out early in the morning, but was detained by the importunity of my friends. The king had delayed my setting out, by several orders sent me in the evening each day; and I plainly saw there was some meaning in this, and that he was wishing to throw dif-

* See MS. Annals, life of Yasous II.

† For the remaining information concerning Abyssinia found in Mr Bruce's Journals, see the Appendix to this and the preceding Book, in Volume VII. of this work.

ficulties in the way, till some accident, or sudden emergency (never wanting in that country), should make it absolutely impossible for me to leave Abyssinia. When, therefore, the last message came to Koscam on the 27th, at night, I returned my respectful duty to his majesty, put him in mind of his promise, and, somewhat peevishly I believe, intreated him to leave me to my fortune; that my servants were already gone, and I was resolved to set out next morning.

In the morning early, I was surprised at the arrival of a young nobleman, lately made one of his bedchamber, with fifty light horse. As I was satisfied that leaving Abyssinia without parade, as privately as possible, was the only way to pass through Sennaar, and had therefore insisted upon none of my friends accompanying me, I begged to decline this escort; assigning for my reason, that as the country between this and Ras el Feel belonged first to the Iteghe, and then to Ayto Confu, none of the inhabitants could possibly injure me in passing. It took a long time to settle this, and it was now, as I have said, one o'clock before we set out by the west side of Debra Tzai, having the mountain on our right hand. From the top of that ascent, we saw the plain and flat country below, black, and, in its appearance, one thick wood, which some authors have called lately the Shumeta†, or Nubian forest. But of the meaning of Shumeta I profess myself entirely ignorant; no such word occurring, as far as I know, in any language spoken in these countries.

All the disasters which I had been threatened with in the course of that journey, which I had thus begun,

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* See a chart of the Arabian Gulf, published at London in 1781, by L. S. De la Rochette.

now presented themselves to my mind, and made, for a moment, a strong impression upon my spirits. But it was too late to draw back, the die was cast, for life or for death; home was before me, however distant; and if, through the protection of Providence, I should be fortunate enough to arrive there, I promised myself both ease and the applause of my country, and of all unprejudiced men of sense and learning in Europe, for having, by my own private efforts alone, completed a discovery, which had, from early ages, defied the address, industry, and courage of all the world.

Having, by these reflections, rather hardened, than comforted my heart, I now advanced down the steep side of the mountain, our course nearly N. N. W. through very strong and rugged ground, torn up by the torrents that fall on every side from above. This is called the Descent of Moura; and though both we and our beasts were in great health and spirits, we could not, with our utmost endeavours, advance much more than one mile an hour. Two Greeks, one of whom only was my servant; and a third, nearly blind, flying from poverty and want; an old janissary, who had come to Abyssinia with the Abuna, and a Copht, who left us at Sennaar; these, and some common men who took charge of the beasts, and were to go no further than Tcherkin, were my only companions in this long and weary journey.

At a quarter past four we came to the river Toom Aredo, which, arising in the country of the Kemmont (a people inhabiting the high grounds above, to the S. W.), falls into the river Mahaanah. The Kemmont were a sect once the same as the Falasha, but were baptised in the reign of Facilidas, and, ever since, have continued separate from their ancient brethren. No great pains seem to have been taken with them since their admission to Christianity, for they retain

most of their ancient customs. They eat the meat of cattle killed by Christians, but not of those that are slaughtered either by Mahometans or Falasha. They hold, as a doctrine, that, being once baptised, and having once communicated, no sort of prayer, nor other attention to divine worship, is further necessary. They wash themselves from head to foot after coming from the market, or any public place, where they may have touched any one of a sect different from their own, esteeming all such unclean. They abstain from all sorts of work on Saturday, keeping close at home; but they grind corn, and do many other such-like works, upon Sunday.

Their women pierce their ears, and apply weights to make them hang down, and to enlarge the holes, into which they put ear-rings almost as big as shackles, in the same manner as the Bedowis in Syria and Palestine. Their language is the same as that of the Falasha, with some small difference of idiom. They have great abhorrence to fish, which they not only refrain from eating, but cannot bear the sight of; and the reason they give for this is, that Jonah the prophet (from whom they boast they are descended) was swallowed by a whale, or some other such great fish. They are hewers of wood, and carriers of water, to Gondar, and are held in great detestation by the Abyssinians.

We crossed the river to the miserable village of Door-Macary, which is on the east side of it; and there we took up our quarters, after a short but very fatiguing day's journey. The people shewed great signs of uneasiness upon our first appearance, and much reluctance to admit us under their roofs; and discovering that we were not any of those that had the honour of being descended from the prophet Jonah, they hid all their pots and drinking-vessels,

lest they should be profaned by our using them. From Door-Macary we discovered a high mountainous ridge, with a very rugged top, stretching from North to south, and towering up in the middle of the forest, about five miles distance; it is called Badjena.

On the 28th, a little after mid-day, we passed Toom Areedo; and went first east, then turned north, into the great road. We soon after passed a number of villages; those on the high mountain Badjena on the east, and those belonging to the church of Koscam on the west. Continuing still north, inclining very little to the west, we came to a steep and rugged descent, at the foot of which runs the Mogetch, in a course straight north; this descent is called the *And.* At a quarter past two we passed the Mogetch, our direction N. W. It is here a large, swift-running stream, perfectly clear; and we halted some time to refresh ourselves upon its banks, remembering how very different it was from what we had once left it, discoloured with blood, and choaked up with dead bodies, after the defeat of the king's right wing, at the battle of Serbraxos.

At half past three we resumed our journey. A sharp and pyramidal mountain stands alone in the middle of the plain, presenting its high sharp top through the trees, and making here a very picturesque and uncommon appearance. It is called Gutch, and seemed to be distant from us about six miles due north. A few minutes after this we passed a small stream called Agam Ohha, or the Brook of Jessamine; from a beautiful species of that shrub, very frequent here, and on the sides of the small streams in the province of Sire.

A few minutes past four we entered a thick wood, winding round a hill, in a south-east direction, to get into the plain below, where we were surrounded by a

great multitude of men, armed with lances, shields, slings, and large clubs or sticks, who rained a shower of stones towards us, as I may say; for they were at such a distance, that all of them fell greatly short of us. Whether this was owing to fear or not, we did not know; but supposing that it was, we thought it our interest to keep it up as much as possible I therefore ordered two shots to be fired over their heads; not with any intention to hurt them, but to let them hear, by the balls whistling among the leaves of the trees, that our guns carried farther than any of their slings; and that, distant as they then were, they were not in safety, if we had a disposition to do them harm. They seemed to understand our meaning, by gliding through among the bushes, and appearing at the top of a hill farther off, where they continued hooping and crying, and making divers signs, which we could not, neither did we endeavour to understand. Another shot, aimed at the trees above them, shewed they were still within our reach, upon which they dispersed, or sat down among the bushes; for we saw them no more, till pitching our tent upon the plain below two of their villages: it seemed they were uneasy, for they had dispatched a man naked, and without arms, who, standing upon the rock, cried out, in the language of Tigre, that he wanted to come to us. This I absolutely refused, that he might not see the smallness of our number, crying out to him to get farther off, or we would instantly shoot him. There was no occasion to repeat the admonition. From the rock where he stood, he slid down like an eel, and appeared again at a considerable distance, still making a sign of wanting to speak with us.

While resting on the banks of the river Mogetch, we had been overtaken by two men and two women, who were driving two loaded asses, and were

going to Tcherkin; they had desired leave to keep company with us, for fear of danger on the road. I had two Abyssinian servants, but they were not yet come up, attending one of the baggage mules that was lame, as they said; but I believe, rather busied with some engagements of their own in the villages. We were obliged then to have recourse to one of these stranger women, who understood the language of Tigre, and undertook readily to carry our message to the stranger, who was still very busy making signs from behind a tree, without coming one step nearer.

My message to them was, that if they shewed the smallest appearance of farther insolence, either by approaching the tent, or slinging stones that night, the next morning, when the horse I expected were come up, I would burn their town, and put every man of them to the sword. A very submissive answer was sent back, with a heap of lies in excuse of what they called their mistake. My two servants coming soon after, both of whom, hereafter, were to be in the service of Ayto Confu, went boldly one to each village, to bring two goats, some jars of bouza, and to prepare fifty loaves of bread for next morning. The goats were dispatched instantly, so was the bouza; but when the morning came, the people had all fled from their houses, without preparing any bread. These villages were called Gimbaar. They were three in number; each situated upon the top of a pointed hill, in a direction from east to west, and made a very beautiful appearance from the plain below. They belonged to my great enemies, Guebra Mehedin, and Confu, late sons of Basha Eusebius.

On the other hand, as my servants told me that a messenger of the king had passed that morning without taking any notice of us, I began to suspect that it was some stratagem of his to frighten me from pur-

suing my journey; which, after the letters I had received from Sennaar, and which he himself had heard read, he never thought I would have undertaken. This I still believe might be the case; for these peasants did not show any forwardness to do us harm; however, it turned out as unfortunately for them, as if they really pursued us for vengeance.

As soon as we found the villages deserted, and that there were no hopes of a supply of bread, we struck our tent, and proceeded on our journey; the pointed mountain Gutch bore north from our tent, at the distance of about two miles.

On the 29th, at ten in the forenoon, we left the inhospitable villages of Gimbaar, not without entertaining some apprehensions of meeting the inhabitants again in the course of the day. But, though we took every precaution against being surprised, that prudence could dictate, our fears of the encounter did not rise to any great height. I got, indeed, on horseback, leaving my mule; and, putting on my coat of mail, leaving the fire-arms under the command of Hagi Ismael, the old Turk, I rode always about a quarter of a mile before the baggage, that they might not come suddenly upon us, as they had done the night before.

In a few minutes we passed three small clear streams in a very fertile country; the soil was a black loamy earth; the grass already parched, or rather entirely burnt up by the sun. Though this country is finely watered, and must be very fertile, yet it is thinly inhabited, and, as we were informed, very unwholesome. At three quarters past ten we came to the river Mahaanah, which swallows up these three brooks, its course nearly N. W.; it was, even at this dry season of the year, a considerable stream.

Here we rested half an hour, and then pursued our journey straight north. We passed a large and deep valley called Werk Meidan, or the country of gold, though there is no gold in it. It is full of wood and bushes. We had left it six miles, at least, on our left hand, and the baggage near half a mile behind, when I met two men very decently dressed, one mounted on a mule, the other on foot; both of them armed with lances and shields, and both seemed surprised to see a man on horseback alone, completely armed. The rider passed by at a very quick pace, apparently not desirous of any intercourse with me. The man on foot at passing saluted me with a *Salam Alicum;* by which I knew him to be a Mahometan; and we were about to enter into conversation, when his neighbour called to him, with seeming impatience. He immediately left me, saying only these short sentences, "He there before is a Christian, and a liar; don't be afraid; Ayto Confu will be at Tcherkin as soon as you."

Upon this we parted; I passed on something more than a mile farther, and at ten minutes after twelve stopped for the baggage. The Mahaanah is here about a quarter of a mile to the N. E. and the sharp-pointed mountain of Gutch S. E. and by E. distance about three miles. It was some time before our baggage came up, when our companions, who escorted it, exhibited some small marks of confusion.

The Turk was blustering violently in Turkish, and setting all at defiance, wishing to be attacked by a hundred that minute; the others seemed to be much more moderate, and not to agree with Hagi Ismael, either in time, or in number, but were very willing to be exempted from attacks altogether. I asked them what was the occasion of all this warlike discourse from Ismael, who scarcely spoke Arabic so as to be

understood? I could learn nothing but threats against the Christians. At last, the servants told me, that the Abyssinians, who passed, had informed them, that at a certain pass, called Dav-Dohha, which we should arrive at next day, above a thousand men, Christians, Pagans, and Mahometans, all armed, were waiting for us, resolved to cut us to pieces rather than let us pass; that the Shangalla were expected to burn Tcherkin, and Ayto Confu's house; and that his Billetana Gueta, Ammonios, had come with a multitude of mules to carry away all that was valuable in it. He added, moreover, that Abba Gimbaro, chief of Sancaho, was sent for by Ayto Confu, and entrusted with the defence of Tcherkin Amba, the hill upon which Ayto Confu's house is situated. He then called the Mahometan, who spoke to me, to witness the truth of all this, which he did with repeated oaths; and concluded, that nothing remained for us but to return to Gondar. They all, in anxious expectation, awaited my resolution. One of the servants said, that, by going out of the way about half a day, we could avoid the pass of Dav-Dohha altogether. I told them, this was neither a time nor place for deliberation; that we should make the best of our way to Waalia, where we were to sleep that night; as that was a town where there was a market, and people came from every part, we should there hear news, after which I promised to tell them my opinion. We accordingly set out for Waalia, and at half past four in the afternoon encamped in the market-place.

Waalia is a collection of villages, each placed upon the top of a hill, and inclosing, as in a circle, an extensive flat piece of ground about three miles over, on which a very well-frequented market is kept. The name is given it from a species of small pigeons, with yel-

low breasts and variegated backs*, the fattest and best of all the pigeon kind. Waalia lies due N. W. from Gondar.

Having finished our dinner, or rather supper, about seven, for we made but one meal a-day, after taking care of our beasts, we entered into consultation what was next to be done. I told them, the first step we were to take was to send and call the Shum of one of the villages, and after him another, and if, knowing me to be the king's stranger, seeing the smallness of our number, and being informed that we were going to Tcherkin, to the house of Ayto Confu, their master, they did not tell us there were dangers on the road, we might be sure the intelligence we had received was void of foundation. "Sir," says one of the strangers, that drove the asses, "it is a lie. No man but Ayto Confu, not even Ayto Confu himself, could raise 500 men in this country; no not even 300, Pagans, Mahometans, and Christians altogether. Where is he to get his Pagans, unless he means his own Christian sort, who, indeed, are more Pagans than any thing else, and capable of every mischief? but there is not a Mahometan on this road that does not know who you are, and that you was Yasine's master, and gave him Ras el Feel. Stay here but a few days till I send to Ras el Feel, and to Tcherkin, and if you do not take the houses and wives, and all that these five hundred men have in the world from them, with the help you may find at Waalia, spit upon me for a liar, or my name is not Abdullah." "Abdullah," said I, "you are a sensible fellow, though I did not know you was so well acquainted with me, nor do I wish that you speak of me in that manner publicly. But what con-

* See the article Waalia in the Appendix.

vinces me of the truth of what you say, is, that the man on foot had no more time but to say to me, in Arabic, while passing, that his companion on the mule was a liar, and that I should not be afraid, for there was no danger on the road, and that Ayto Confu would be at Tcherkin as soon as I; from which, and his saying just the contrary to you, I do believe the whole is a stratagem of the king."

All agreed in this. Hagi Ismael mentioned it as a proof of the worthlessness of Christians, that even their kings were as great liars as common men; and we had scarcely done with this consultation, and dispelled our fears, when word was brought to the tent, that the chiefs of two of the principal villages were at the door, desiring to be admitted, and had with them several servants loaded with provisions. They were immediately introduced, and they presented us with two goats, several jars of bouza, and a quantity of bread, which I divided among my retinue, now become half Christians, and half Mahometans, neither of whom ate meat killed by the other.

After the first civilities were over, I asked the governor of Waalia all the questions that were needful, about the state of the roads and the country, and whether the Shangalla ever made an attempt upon Tcherkin? They said, "All was peace; that the people came and went to the market without being interrupted." They laughed at the question about the Shangalla. "Ayto Confu," they said, "sometimes went down and destroyed many of that people, and brought others away as slaves; but the Shangalla were not men to attack a place where there was a number of horse, nor to climb mountains to destroy houses well-stored with fire-arms." "Have you," said I, "seen nobody pass by from Ayto Confu lately?" "About four or five days ago," answered he, "a servant was here,

with orders to have victuals ready for you; who also told us, that he would come himself in three or four days after. I heard also, that his servant, Ammonios had gone round Nara to take possession of some villages the king had given Ozoro Esther, and that he had with him a number of horse and foot, and several Ozoros, going to Tcherkin, but they had gone the upper road, consequently had not come this way. "Is there no danger," said I, "in passing Dav-Dohha?" "Why, at Dav Dohha," said he, "there is danger; it is a bad place, nobody passes it on horseback; but I see your horses are shod with iron, which none in this country are; however, to avoid all danger, you had better lead your horses and mules, and walk on foot; it is not far."

I could not help bursting out into a fit of laughter at the fancied danger that attended us at Dav-Dohha; and, as I saw this disconcerted our informer, and that he thought he had said something wrong, I told him briefly what had passed at meeting with the two men upon the road. He laughed very heartily at this in his turn. "That man did not stop here," says he, "and who he is I know not; but whoever he is, he is a liar, and a beast of the field. All the people of Dav-Dohha are our relations, and Ayto Confu's servants; if there had been any body to attack you, there would have been found here people to defend you. What signifies his ordering us to furnish you with victuals, if he was to suffer your throats to be cut before you came to eat them? I will answer for you between this and Tcherkin; after that, all is wilderness, and no man knows if he is to meet friend, or foe."

I told him, then, what had happened to us at Gimbaar, at which he seemed exceedingly surprised.—"These villages," says he, "do not belong to Ayto Confu, but to his cousins, the sons of Basha Eusebius.

They, indeed, died in rebellion; but our master has taken possession of them for the family, lest the king should give them away to a stranger. Some bad news must have arrived from Gondar; at any rate, if you are afraid, I will accompany you to-morrow past Dav-Dohha." We thanked him for the kind offer, but excused ourselves from accepting it, as we fully relied upon his intelligence; and, having made him some trifling presents, about the value of what he brought, though in his eyes much more considerable, we took our leave, mutually satisfied with each other. From this I no longer doubted that the whole was a project of the king to terrify me, and make me return. What struck me, as most improbable of all, was the story of that lying wretch, who said, that Ayto Confu had sent a number of mules to carry away his furniture, and trusted the defence of his palace to Abba Gimbaro, chief of the Baasa. For, first, I knew well it did not need many mules to carry away the furniture which Ayto Confu left at Tcherkin in time of war, and when he was not there; next, had he known that any person whatever, Shangalla, or Christians, had intended to attack Tcherkin, he was not a man to fight by proxy, or lieutenants; he would have been himself present to meet them, as to a feast, though he had been carried thither in a sick-bed.

On the 30th, at half past six in the morning, we set out from Waalia; and, though we were perfectly cured of our apprehensions, the company all joined in desiring me to go along with them, and not before them. They wisely added, that, in a country like that, where there was no fear of God, I could not know what it might be in the power of the devil to do. I, therefore, hung my arms upon my horse, and, taking a gun in my hand, wandered among the trees by the road-side, in pursuit of the doves, or pigeons. In a

few hours I had shot several scores of them, especially on the banks of the Mai Lumi, or the River of Lemons. We came to it in about an hour from Waalia, and coasted it for some minutes, as it ran north-east parallel to our course.

A prodigious quantity of fruit loaded the branches of these trees, even likely to break them; and these were in all stages of ripeness. Multitudes of blossoms covered the opposite part of the tree, and sent forth the most delicious odour possible. We provided ourselves amply with this fruit. The natives make no use of it; but we found it a great refreshment to us, both mixed with our water, and as sauce to our meat, of which we had now no great variety since our onions had failed us, and a supply of them was no longer to be procured.

At fourteen minutes past seven, continuing north-west, we crossed the river Mai Lumi, which here runs west; and, continuing still north-west, at eight o'clock we came to the mouth of the formidable pass, Dav-Dohha, which we entered with good countenance enough, having first rested five minutes to put ourselves in order, and we found our appetites failing us through excessive heat. The pass of Dav-Dohha is a very narrow defile, full of strata of rocks, like steps of stairs, but so high, that, without leaping, or being pulled up, no horse, or mule, can ascend. Moreover, the descent, though short, is very steep, and almost choaked up by huge stones, which the torrents, after washing the earth from about them, had rolled down from the mountain above. Both sides of the defile are covered thick with wood and bushes, especially that detestable thorn the kantuffa, so justly reprobated in Abyssinia.

Having extricated ourselves successfully from this pass, our spirits were so elated, that we began to think

our journey now at an end, not reflecting how many passes, full of real danger, were still before us. At three quarters past eight we came to Werkleva *, a village of Mahometans. Above this, too, is Armatchiko, a famous hermitage, and around it huts, inhabited by a number of monks. These, and their brethren of Magwena, are capital performers in all disorders of the state; all prophets and diviners, keeping up the spirit of riot, anarchy, and tumult, by their fanatical inventions and pretended visions.

Having rested a few minutes at Tabaret Wunze, a wretched village, composed of miserable huts, on the banks of a small brook, at a quarter after two we passed the Coy, a large river, which falls into the Mahaanah. From Mai Lumi to this place the country was but indifferent in appearance; the soil, indeed, exceedingly good, but a wildness and look of desolation covered the whole of it. The grass was growing high, the country extensive, and almost without habitation, whilst the few huts that were to be seen seemed more than ordinarily miserable, and were hid in recesses, or in the edge of vallies overgrown with wood. The inhabitants seemed to have come there by stealth, with a desire to live concealed and unknown.

On the 31st of December we left our station at the head of a difficult pass, called Coy Gulgulet, or the Descent of Coy, at the foot of which runs the river Coy, one of the largest we had yet seen, but I did not discern any fish in it. Here we rested a little to refresh ourselves and our beasts, after the fatigues we had met with in descending through this pass.

At half after eight we came to the banks of the Germa, which winds along the valley, and falls into

* Written in Abyssinian, Werklebeho.—E.

the Angrab. After having continued some time by the side of the Germa, and crossed it going N. W. we, at then, passed the small river Idola; and half an hour after came to Deber, a house of Ayto Confu, on the top of a mountain, by the side of a small river of that name. The country here is partly in wood, and partly in plantations of dora. It is very well-watered, and seems to produce abundant crops; but it is not beautiful; the soil is red earth, and the bottoms of all the rivers soft and earthy, the water heavy, and generally ill-tasted, even in the large rivers, such as the Coy and the Germa. I imagine there is some mineral in the red earth, with a proportion of which the water is impregnated.

At Deber, I observed the following bearings from the mountains; Ras el Feel was west, Tcherkin N. N. W., Debra Hariah, north. We found nobody at Deber that could give us the least account of Ayto Confu. We left it, therefore, on the morning of the 1st of January, 1772. At half past ten o'clock we passed a small village, called Dembic, and about mid-day came to the large river Tchema, which falls into the larger river Dwang, below, to the westward.—About an hour after, we came to the Mogetch, a river not so large as the Tchema, but which, like it, joins the Dwang. Here we have a view of the steep mountain Magwena, where there is a monastery of that name, possessed by a multitude of lazy, profligate, ignorant monks. Magwena, excepting one mountain, is a bare, even ridge of rocks, which seemingly bear nothing, but are black, as if calcined by the sun. In the rainy season it is said every species of verdure is here in the greatest luxuriancy; all the plantations of corn about Deber are much infested with a small, beautiful, green monkey, with a long tail, called Tota.

Between three and four in the afternoon we encamped at Eggir Dembic; and in the evening we passed along the side of a small river running west, which falls into the Mogetch.

I took advantage of the pleasantest and latest hour for shooting the waalia, or the yellow-breasted pigeon, as also Guinea-fowls, which are here in great abundance among the corn; in plumage nothing different from ours, and very excellent meat. The sun was just setting, and I was returning to my tent, not from weariness, or satiety of sport, but from my attendant being incapable of carrying the load of game I had already killed, when I was met by a man with whom I was perfectly acquainted, and who, by his address, likewise seemed no stranger to me. I immediately recollected him to be a servant of Ozoro Esther; but this he denied, and said he was a servant of Ayto Confu; however, as Confu lived in the same house with his mother at Koscam, the mistake seemed not to be of any moment. He said he came to meet Ayto Confu, who was expected at Tcherkin that night, and was sent to search for us, as we seemed to have tarried on the road. He had brought two mules, in case any of ours had been tired, and preposed that the next morning I should set out with him alone for Tcherkin, where I should find Ayto Confu, and my baggage should follow me. I told him, that it was my fixed resolution, made at the beginning of my journey, and which I should adhere to till the end, never to separate myself on the road from my servants and company, who were strangers, and without any other protection than that of being with me.

The man continued to press me very much all that evening, so that we were greatly surprised at what he could mean, and I still more and more resolved not to gratify him. Often I thought he wanted to commu-

nicate something to me, but he refrained, and I continued obstinate; and the rather so, as there was no certainty that Ayto Confu was yet arrived. I asked him, if Billetana Gueta Ammonios was not at Tcherkin? He answered, without the smallest alteration in his countenance, that he was not. No people on earth dissemble like the Abyssinians; this talent is born with them, and they improve it by continual practice. As we had, therefore, previously resolved, we passed the evening at Eggir Dembic, and the servant, finding he could not prevail, left our tent, and we all went to bed. He did not seem angry, but at going out of the tent, said, as half to himself, "I cannot blame you; in such a journey nothing is like firmness."

On the 2d of January, in the morning, by seven o'clock, having dressed my hair, and perfumed it according to the custom of the country, and put on clean clothes, with no other arms but my knife, and a pair of pistols at my girdle, I came out of the tent to mount my mule for Tcherkin. I now saw Confu's servant, whose name was Welleta Yasous, pulling the Guinea-fowls and pigeons out of the pannier, where my servants had put them, and scattering them upon the ground; and he was saying to those who interrupted him, "Throw away this carrion; you shall have a better breakfast and dinner, too, to-day;" and turning to me more than ordinarily pleased at seeing me dressed, and that I continued to use the Abyssinian habit, he jumped upon his mule, and appeared in great spirits, and we all set out at a brisker pace than usual, by the assistance of the two fresh mules.

We passed through the midst of several small villages. At half an hour past eight we came to the mountain of Tcherkin, which we rounded on the west, and then on the north, keeping the mountain always on

our right. At twenty minutes past ten I pitched my tent in the market-place at Tcherkin, which seemed a beautiful lawn laid out for pleasure, shaded with fine old trees, of an enormous height and size, and watered by a small, but very limpid, brook, running over beds of pebbles as white as snow.

CHAP. II.

Reception at Tcherkin by Ozoro Esther, &c.—Hunting of the Elephant, Rhinoceros, and Buffalo.

THE impatient Welleta Yasous would scarcely give me time to see my quadrant and other instruments safely stowed, but hurried me through a very narrow and crooked path up the side of the mountain, at every turn of which was placed a great rock, or stone, the station for muskets to enfilade the different stages of the road below, where it was strait for any distance. We at last reached the outer court, where we found the chamberlain Ammonios, whom Welleta Yasous had spoken of as being still at Gondar; but this did not surprise me, as he told me at the tent that Ayto Confu was arrived. I saw here a great many of my old acquaintance whom I had known at Ozoro Esther's house at Gondar, and who all welcomed me with the greatest demonstrations of joy, as if I had come from a long journey.

I was then taken to an inner apartment, where, to my great surprise, instead of Ayto Confu, I saw his mother, Ozoro Esther, sitting on a couch, and at her feet the secretary's daughter, the beautiful Tecla Mariam: and, soon after, the secretary himself, and

several others belonging to the court. After having made a profound obeisance, "Ozoro Esther," said I, "I cannot speak for surprise. What is the meaning of your having left Gondar to come into this wilderness? As for Tecla Mariam, I am not surprised at seeing her; I know she at any time would rather die than leave you; but that you have both come hither without Ayto Confu, and in so short a time, is what I cannot comprehend."—"There is nothing so strange in this," replied Ozoro Esther; "the troops of Begemder have taken away my husband, Ras Michael, God knows where; and, therefore, being now a single woman, I am resolved to go to Jerusalem to pray for my husband, and to die there, and be buried in the Holy Sepulchre. You would not stay with us, so we are going with you. Is there any thing surprising in all this?"

"But tell me truly," says Tecla Mariam, "you that know every thing, while peeping and poring through these long glasses, did not you learn by the stars that we were to meet you here?"—"Madam," answered I, "if there was one star in the firmament that had announced to me such agreeable news, I should have relapsed into the idolatry of this country, and worshipped that star for the rest of my life." Breakfast now came in; the conversation took a very lively turn, and from the secretary I learned that the matter stood thus: The king, restoring the villages to the Iteghe, according to the stipulation of his last treaty with Powussen, thought that he might so far infringe upon it, from gratitude to Ras Michael, as to give part of the number to Ozoro Esther, the Iteghe's daughter; and Ayto Confu, going to Tcherkin to hunt, he took his mother along with him to put her in possession; for the Iteghe's people were not lambs, nor did they pay much regard to the orders of the

king, nor to those of the Iteghe their mistress, at all times, farther than suited their own convenience.

We now wanted only the presence of Ayto Confu to make our happiness complete; he came about four, and with him Ayto Engedan, and a great company. There was nothing but rejoicing on all sides. Seven ladies, relations and companions of Ozoro Esther, came with Ayto Confu; and I confess this to have been one of the happiest moments of my life. I quite forgot the disastrous journey I had before me, and all the dangers that awaited me. I began even to regret being so far in my way to leave Abyssinia for ever. We learned from Ayto Confu, that it had been reported at Gondar that we had been murdered by the peasants of Gimbaar, but the contrary was soon known. However, Engedan and he had set the lesser village on fire in their passage, and laid a contribution of eleven ounces of gold upon the two larger.

Ayto Confu's house at Tcherkin is built on the edge of a precipice, which takes its name from the mountain Amba Tcherkin. It is built all with cane, very artificially, the outer wall being composed of fascines of cane, so neatly joined together as not to be penetrated by rain or wind. The entry is from the south side of it, very crooked and difficult, half way up the rock. On the east, is a very plentiful spring, which furnishes the house with excellent water. Yet, after all, this house, though inaccessible, is not defensible, and affords very little safety to its master; for the Shangalla, with flax, or any thing combustible, tied to the point of their arrows, would easily set it on fire if they once approached it; and the Abyssinians with guns could as easily destroy it, as, on such occasions, they wrap their balls in cotton wads. The inside of the state rooms were hung with long stripes of carpeting, and the floors covered with the same.

There is great plenty of game of every sort about Tcherkin; elephants, rhinoceroses, and a great number of buffaloes, which differ nothing in form from the buffaloes of Europe or of Egypt, but very much in temper and disposition. They are fierce, rash, and fearless of danger; and, contrary to the practice of any other creature not carnivorous, they attack the traveller and the hunter equally, and it requires address to escape from them. They seem to be, of all others, the creature most given to ease and indulgence. They lie under the most shady trees, near large pools of water, of which they make constant use, and sleep soundly all the day long. The flesh of the female is very good when fat, but that of the male, hard, lean, and disagreeable. Their horns are used in various manners by the turners, in which craft the Abyssinians are very expert. In the woods there are many civet cats, but they know not the use of them, nor how to extract the civet. The Mahometans only are possessed of this art.

Though we were all happy to our wish in this enchanted mountain, the active spirit of Ayto Confu could not rest. He was come to hunt the elephant, and hunt him he would. All those that understood any thing of this exercise had assembled from a great distance, to meet Ayto Confu at Tcherkin. He and Engedan, from the moment they arrived, had been over-looking, from the precipice, their servants training and managing their horses in the market-place below. Great bunches of the finest canes had been brought from Kuara for javelins; and the whole house was employed in fitting heads to them in the most advantageous manner. For my part, though I should have been very well contented to have remained where I was, yet the preparations for sport of so noble a kind roused my spirits, and made me desirous to join

in it. On the other hand, the ladies all declared, that they thought, by leaving them, we were devoting them to death or slavery, as they did not doubt, if the Shangalla missed us, they would come forward to the mountain, and slay them all. But a sufficient garrison was left under Azage Kyrillos, and Billetana Gueta Ammonios; and we were well assured that the Shangalla, being informed we were out, and armed, and knowing our numbers, would take care to keep close in their thickets far out of our way.

On the 6th, an hour before day, after a hearty breakfast, we mounted on horseback, to the number of about thirty, belonging to Ayto Confu. But there was another body, both of horse and foot, which made hunting the elephant their particular business. These men dwell constantly in the woods, and know very little the use of bread, living entirely upon the flesh of the beasts they kill, chiefly that of the elephant or rhinoceros. They are exceedingly thin, light, and agile, both on horseback and foot; are very swarthy, though few of them black; none of them woolly-headed, and all of them have European features. They are called Agageer, a name of their profession, not of their nation, which comes from the word Agar, and signifies to hough, or ham-string, with a sharp weapon. More properly it means, indeed, the cutting the tendon of the heel, and is a characteristic of the manner in which they kill the elephant, which is shortly as follows:—Two men, absolutely naked, without any rag or covering at all about them, get on horseback; this precaution is from fear of being laid hold of by the trees or bushes, in making their escape from a very watchful enemy. One of these riders sits upon the back of the horse, sometimes with a saddle, and sometimes without one, with only a switch or short stick in one hand, carefully managing the

bridle with the other; behind him sits his companion, who has no other arms but a broad-sword, such as is used by Sclavonians, and which is brought from Trieste. His left hand is employed grasping the sword by the handle, and about fourteen inches of the blade is covered with whip-cord. This part he takes in his right hand, without any danger of being hurt by it; and, though the edges of the lower part of the sword are as sharp as a razor, he carries it without a scabbard.

As soon as the elephant is found feeding, the horseman rides before him as near his face as possible; or, if he flies, crosses him in all directions, crying out, "I am such a man and such a man; this is my horse, that has such a name; I killed your father in such a place, and your grandfather in such another place, and I am now come to kill you; you are but an ass in comparison of them." This nonsense he verily believes the elephant understands, who, chafed and angry at hearing the noise immediately before him, seeks to seize him with his trunk or proboscis, and, intent upon this, follows the horse everywhere, turning and turning round with him, neglectful of making his escape by running straight forward, in which consists his only safety. After having made him turn once or twice in pursuit of the horse, the horseman rides close up along-side of him, and drops his companion just behind on the off side; and while he engages the elephant's attention upon the horse, the footman behind gives him a drawn stroke just above the heel, or what in man is called the tendon of Achilles. This is the critical moment; the horseman immediately wheels round, and takes his companion up behind him, and rides off full speed after the rest of the herd, if they have started more than one; and sometimes an ex-

pert Agageer will kill three out of one herd. If the sword is good, and the man not afraid, the tendon is commonly entirely separated; and if it is not cut through, it is generally so far divided, that the animal, with the stress he puts upon it, breaks the remaining part asunder. In either case, he remains incapable of advancing a step, till the horseman return, or his companions coming up, pierce him through with javelins and lances; he then falls to the ground, and expires with the loss of blood.

The Agageer nearest me presently lamed his elephant, and left him standing. Ayto Engedan, Ayto Confu, Guebra Mariam, and several others, fixed their spears in the other, before the Agageer had cut his tendons. My Agageer, however, having wounded the first elephant, failed in the pursuit of the second, and, being close upon him at entering the wood, he received a violent blow from a branch of a tree which the elephant had bent by his weight, and after passing, allowed it to replace itself, when it knocked down both the riders, and very much hurt the horse. This, indeed, is the great danger in elephant-hunting; for some of the trees, that are dry and short, break, by the violent pressure of so immense a body moving so rapidly, and fall upon the pursuers, or across the roads. But the greatest number of these trees, being of a succulent quality, they bend without breaking, and return quickly to their former position, when they strike both horse and man so violently, that they often beat them to pieces, and scatter them upon the plain. Dextrous, too, as the riders are, the elephant sometimes reaches them with his trunk, with which he dashes the horse against the ground, and then sets his feet upon him, till he tears him limb from limb with his proboscis; a great many hunters die this way. Besides this the soil, at this time of the year, is split into deep chasms,

or cavities, by the heat of the sun, so that nothing can be more dangerous than the riding.

The elephant once slain, they cut the whole flesh off his bones into thongs, like the reins of a bridle, and hang these, like festoons, upon the branches of trees, till they become perfectly dry, without salt; and they then lay them by for their provisions in the season of the rains.

I need say nothing of the figure of the elephant; his form is known, and anecdotes of his life and character are to be found everywhere. But his description, at length, is given, with his usual accuracy and elegance, by that great master of natural history, the Count de Buffon, my most venerable, learned, and amiable friend, the Pliny of modern Europe, and the true portrait of what a man of learning and fashion should be.

I shall only take upon me to resolve a difficulty which he seems to have had,—for what use the teeth of the elephant, and the horns of the rhinoceros, were intended. He, with reason, explodes the vulgar prejudice, that these arms were given them by Nature to fight with each other. He asks very properly, What can be the ground of that animosity? neither of them are carnivorous; they do not couple together, therefore are not rivals in love; and, as for food, the vast forests they inhabit furnish them with an abundant and everlasting store.

But neither the elephant nor rhinoceros eat grass. The sheep, goats, horses, cattle, and all the beasts of the country, live upon branches of trees. There are, in every part of these immense forests, trees of a soft, succulent substance, full of pith. These are the principal food of the elephant and rhinoceros. They first eat the tops of these leaves and branches; they then, with their horns or teeth begin as near to

the root as they can, and rip, or cut the more woody part, or trunks of these, up to where they were eaten before, till they fall in so many pliable pieces, of the size of laths. After this, they take all these in their monstrous mouths, and twist them round, as we would do the leaves of a lettuce. The vestiges of this process, in its different stages, we saw every day throughout the forest; and the horns of the rhinoceros, and teeth of the elephant, are often found broken, when their gluttony leads them to attempt too large or firm a tree.

There now remained but two elephants of those that had been discovered, which were a she-one with a calf. The Agageer would willingly have let these alone, as the teeth of the female are very small, and the young one is of no sort of value, even for food, its flesh shrinking much upon drying. But the hunters would not be limited in their sport. The people having observed the place of her retreat, thither we eagerly followed. She was very soon found, and as soon lamed by the Agageers; but when they came to wound her with the darts, as every one did in turn, to our very great surprise, the young one, which had been suffered to escape unheeded and unpursued, came out from the thicket apparently in great anger, running upon the horses and men with all the violence it was master of. I was amazed; and as much as ever I was, upon such an occasion, afflicted, at seeing the great affection of the little animal defending its wounded mother, heedless of its own life or safety. I therefore cried to them, for God's sake to spare the mother, though it was then too late; and the calf had made several rude attacks upon me, which I avoided without difficulty; but I am happy to this day, in the reflection that I did not strike it. At last, ma-

king one of its attacks upon Ayto Engedan, it hurt him a little on the leg; upon which he thrust it through with his lance, as others did after, and it then fell dead before its wounded mother, whom it had so affectionately defended. It was about the size of an ass, but round, big-bellied, and heavily made; and was so furious, and unruly, that it would easily have broken the leg either of man or horse, could it have overtaken them, and jostled against them properly.

Here is an example of a beast (a young one too) possessing abstracted sentiments to a very high degree. By its flight on the first appearance of the hunters, it is plain it apprehended danger to itself; it also reflected upon that of its mother, which was the cause of its return to her assistance. This affection or duty, or let us call it any thing we please, except instinct, was stronger than the fear of danger; and it must have conquered that fear by reflection before it returned, when it resolved to make its best and last efforts, for it never attempted to fly afterwards. I freely forgive that part of my readers, who know me and themselves so little, as to think I believe it worth my while to play the mountebank, for the great honour of diverting them; an honour far from being of the first rate in my esteem. If they should shew, in this place, a degree of doubt, that, for once, I am making use of the privilege of travellers, and dealing a little in the marvellous, it would be much more to the credit of their discernment, than their prodigious scruples about the reality or possibility of eating raw flesh; a thing that has been recorded by the united testimony of all that ever visited Abyssinia for these two hundred years; has nothing unreasonable in itself, though contrary to our practice in other cases; and can only be called in question now,

through weakness, ignorance, or an intemperate desire to find fault, by those that believed that a man could get into a quart bottle.

What I relate of the young elephant contains difficulties of another kind; though I am very well persuaded some will swallow it easily, who cannot digest the raw flesh. In both instances I adhere strictly to the truth; and I beg leave to assure those scrupulous readers, that if they knew their author, they would think that his having invented a lie, solely for the pleasure of diverting them, was much more improbable than either of the two foregoing facts. He places his merit in having accomplished these travels in general, not in being present at any one incident during the course of them; the believing of which can reflect no particular honour upon himself, nor the disbelieving it any sort of disgrace in the minds of liberal and unprejudiced men. It is for these only he would wish to write, and these are the only persons who can profit from his narrative.

The Agageers, having procured as much meat as would maintain them a long time, could not be persuaded to continue the hunting any longer. Part of them remained with the she-elephant, which seemed to be the fattest; though the one they killed first was by much the most valuable, on account of its long teeth. It was still alive, nor did it seem an easy operation to kill it, without the assistance of our Agageers, even though it was totally helpless, except with its trunk.

We sought about for the buffaloes and rhinoceroses; but though there was plenty of both in the neighbourhood, we could not find them; our noise and shooting in the morning having probably scared them away. One rhinoceros only was seen by a servant. We returned in the evening to a great fire, and lay all night

under the shade of trees. Here we saw them separate the great teeth of the elephant from the head, by roasting the jaw-bones on the fire, till the lower, thin, and hollow part of the teeth were nearly consumed; and then they come out easily, the thin part being of no value.

The next morning, we were on horseback by the dawn of day, in search of the rhinoceros, many of which we had heard make a very deep groan and cry as the morning approached; several of the Agageers then joined us, and after we had searched about an hour in the very thickest part of the wood, one of them rushed out with great violence, crossing the plain towards a wood of canes that was about two miles distance. But though he ran, or rather trotted, with surprising speed, considering his bulk, he was, in a very little time, transfixed with thirty or forty javelins, which so confounded him, that he left his purpose of going to the wood, and ran into a deep hole, ditch, or ravine, a *cul de sac*, without outlet, breaking above a dozen of the javelins as he entered. Here we thought he was caught as in a trap, for he had scarce room to turn; when a servant, who had a gun, standing directly over him, fired at his head, and the animal fell immediately, to all appearance dead. All those on foot, now jumped in with their knives to cut him up, and they had scarce begun, when the animal recovered so far as to rise upon his knees; happy then was the man who escaped first; and had not one of the Agageers, who was himself engaged in the ravine, cut the sinew of the hind leg as he was retreating, there would have been a very sorrowful account of the foot-hunters that day.

After having dispatched him, I was curious to see what wound the shot had given, which had operated so violently upon so huge an animal; and I doubted

not it was the brain. But it had struck him nowhere but upon the point of the foremost horn, of which it had carried off above an inch; and this occasioned a concussion that had stunned him for a minute, till the bleeding had recovered him. I preserved the horn from curiosity, and have it now by me *. I saw evidently the ball had touched no other part of the beast.

While we were busy with the rhinoceros, Ammonios had joined us. A message from the king had carried away Azage Kyrillos, the secretary. Two other messengers had arrived from the queen, one to Ayto Confu, and another to Ozoro Esther; and it was Ozoro Esther's commands to her son, to leave the hunting and return. There was no remedy but to obey; Ammonios, however, wanted to have his part of the hunting; and the country people told us, that multitudes of buffaloes were to be found a little to the westward, where there were large trees and standing pools of water. We agreed then to hunt homeward, without being over-solicitous about returning early.

We had not gone far, before a wild boar arose between me and Ayto Engedan, which I immediately killed with my javelin. Before he, on his horse, came up to it, another of its companions shared the same fate about a quarter of an hour after. This was the sport I had been many years used to in Barbary, and was infinitely more dextrous at it than any of the present company; this put me more upon a par with my companions, who had not failed to laugh at me, upon my horse's refusal to carry me near either to the elephant or rhinoceros. Nobody would touch the carcase of the boar after it was dead, being an animal which is considered as unclean.

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* See the article Rhinoceros in the Appendix.

Ammonios was a man of approved courage and conduct, who had been in all the wars of Ras Michael, and was placed about Ayto Confu, to lead the troops, curb the presumption, and check the impetuosity of that youthful warrior. He was tall, and awkwardly made; slow in speech and motion, so much as even to excite ridicule; about sixty years of age, and more corpulent than the Abyssinians generally are; in a word, as pedantic and grave in his manner as it is possible to express. He spent his whole leisure time in reading the scriptures, nor did he willingly discourse of any thing else. He had been bred a foot-soldier; and, though he rode as well as many of the Abyssinians, yet, having long stirrup-leathers, with iron rings at the end of them, into which he put his naked toe only, instead of stirrups, he had no strength or agility on horseback, nor was his bridle such as could command his horse to stop, or wind and turn sharply among trees, though he might make a tolerable figure on a plain.

A boar, roused on our right, had wounded a horse and a footman of Ayto Confu, and then escaped. Two buffaloes were found by those on the right, one of which wounded a horse likewise. Ayto Confu, Engedan, Guebra Mariam, and myself, killed the other with equal share of merit, without being in any sort of danger. All this was in little more than an hour, when our sport seemed to be at the best; our horses were considerably blown, not tired, and though we were beating homewards, still we were looking very keenly for more game. Ammonios was on the left among the bushes, and some large, beautiful, tall, spreading trees, close on the banks of the river Bedowi, which stands there in pools. Whether the buffalo found Ammonios, or Ammonios the buffalo, is what we could never get him to explain to us; but he had wounded the beast slightly in the buttock, which, in return, had

gored his horse, and thrown both him and it to the ground. Luckily, however, his cloak had fallen off, which the buffalo tore to pieces, and employed himself for a minute with that and with the horse, but then left them, and followed the man as soon as he saw him rise and run. Ammonios got behind one large tree, and from that to another still larger. The buffalo turned very awkwardly, but kept close in pursuit; and there is no doubt he would have worn our friend out, who was not used to such quick motion. Ayto Engedan, who was near him, and might have assisted him, was laughing, ready to die at the droll figure a man of Ammonios's grave carriage made, running and skipping about naked, with a swiftness he had never before practised; and Engedan continued calling to Confu to partake of the diversion.

The moment I heard his repeated cries, I galloped out of the bushes to the place where he was, and could not help laughing at the ridiculous figure of our friend, very attentive to the beast's motions, which seemed to dodge with great address, and keep to his adversary with the utmost obstinacy. As soon as Engedan saw me, he cried, "Yagoube! for the love of Christ! for the love of the blessed Virgin! don't interfere till Confu comes up." Confu immediately arrived, and laughed more than Engedan, but did not offer to interfere; on the contrary, he clapped his hands, and cried, "Well done, Ammonios," swearing he never saw so equal a match in his life. The unfortunate Ammonios had been driven from tree to tree, till he had got behind one within a few yards of the water; but the brush-wood upon the banks, and his attention to the buffalo, hindered him from seeing how far it was below him. Nothing could be more ridiculous than to see him holding the tree with both his hands, peeping first one way, and then another, to see by which the beast would turn. And well he might be

on his guard; for the animal was absolutely mad, tossing up the ground with his feet both before and behind. "Sir," said I, to Ayto Confu, "this will be but an ugly joke to-night, if we bring home that man's corpse, killed in the very midst of us, while we were looking on." Saying this, I parted at a canter behind the trees, crying to Ammonios, to throw himself into the water, when I should strike the beast; and, seeing the buffalo's head turned from me, at full speed I ran the spear into the lower part of his belly, through his whole intestines, till it came out above a foot on the other side, and there I left it, with a view to hinder the buffalo from turning. It was a spear, which, though small in the head, had a strong, tough, seasoned shaft, which did not break by striking it against the trees and bushes; and it pained and impeded the animal's motions, till Ammonios, quitting the tree, dashed through the bushes with some difficulty, and threw himself into the river. But here a danger occurred that I had not foreseen. The pool was very deep, and Ammonios could not swim; so that, though he escaped from the buffalo, he would infallibly have been drowned, had he not caught hold of some strong roots of a tree shooting out of the bank; and there he lay in perfect safety from the enemy, till our servants went round, and brought him out of the pool, on the further side.

In the mean time, the buffalo, mortally wounded, seeing his enemy had escaped, kept his eyes intent upon us, who were about forty yards from him, walking backwards to us, with intent to turn suddenly upon the nearest horse; when Ayto Confu ordered two men, with guns, to shoot him through the head, and he instantly fell. The two we first killed were females; this last was a bull, and one of the largest, confessedly, that had ever been seen. Though not fat, I guess that he weighed nearer fifty than forty

stone. His horns, from the root, following the line of their curve, were about fifty-two inches, and nearly nine, where thickest, in circumference. They were flat, not round. Ayto Confu ordered the head to be cut off, and cleared of its flesh, so that the horns and skeleton of the head only remained; this he hung up in his great hall among the probosces of elephants, and horns of rhinoceroses, with this inscription in his own language, "*Yagoube, the Kipt, killed this upon the Bedowi* *."

We were now within sight of home, to which we went straight without further hunting. Neither the ridicule nor the condolence of the young men could force one word from Ammonios; only when I asked him whether or not he was hurt, he answered from the scripture. "He that loveth danger shall perish in it." But at night, Ozoro Esther, either really or feignedly, expressing herself as displeased with her son Ayto Confu, Ammonios, who loved the young man sincerely, could not bear to be the occasion of this; so that all resolved itself into mirth and joke. What added to the merriment, was, that the messengers from the Iteghe, brought a large increase to our stock of brandy; and brought also positive orders, both from her and the king, to Ozoro Esther, to determine me, by all possible means, to return to Gondar, or else to repair thither instantly herself.

The evening of the day, whereon we set out to hunt, some men had arrived from Ras el Feel, sent by Yasine, with camels, for our baggage, nothing but mules being used at Tcherkin. They brought word, that the Shangalla were down near the Tacazze, so that now was the time to pass without fear; that Abd

* Such inscriptions are common among the Abyssinians.—E.

el Jeleel, the former Shum of Ras el Feel, Yasine's mortal enemy, had been seen lurking in the country near Sancaho; but as he had only four men, and was himself a known coward, it was not probable he would attempt any thing against us, though it would be always better that we should keep on our guard.

Tcherkin has a market on Saturdays, in which raw cotton, cattle, honey, and coarse cotton cloths are sold. The Shangalla formerly molested Tcherkin greatly, but for thirty years past they had done little damage. The small-pox raged so violently for a number of years among them, that it has greatly diminished their numbers, and consequently their power of troubling their neighbours. At Tcherkin, we saw a prodigious quantity of black scorpions, of a very small kind, seldom in the houses, but chiefly hid under stones; several of our people were stung by them, but no other mischief followed, but a small swelling, and a complaint of cold in the part, which went away in a few hours.

From the descent of Moura, after leaving Debra Tzai, and Koscam, all was thick woods till we arrived at Tcherkin; the roads very rugged and broken, but the weather was exceedingly pleasant; for, though the thermometer was sometimes at 115°, it was always cool in the shade; and, by the side of every river there was a fresh gentle breeze from N. E. especially at mid-day. The mornings were always calm, or with little wind at N. E. It regularly changed about nine to N. W. and then fell calm. About four in the afternoon, it generally was at west or near it; but two currents were constantly distinguished, at night; the lower N. E. veering easterly towards morning; while the white small clouds, very thin and high, coming very rapidly from the S. W., shewed the direction and strength of the higher current. The mornings and

nights were cloudy from the first of January, but the days perfectly serene.

On Wednesday, the eighth of January, having rectified my quadrant with great attention, I found the latitude of Tcherkin, by a meridian altitude of the sun, to be 13° 7′ 30″ N.; and taking a mean between that and the meridian altitude of eleven different stars, the following night, I found the true latitude of Tcherkin Amba to be 13° 7′ 35″ north. But though from that time I was ready to depart, I could not possibly get disengaged from my friends, but by a composition, which was, that I should stay till the 15th, the day before Ozoro Esther and her company were to set out on their return to Gondar; and that they, on their part, should suffer me to depart on that day, without further persuasion, or throwing any obstacle whatever in my way. The king had recommended to them this sort of agreement, if I was obstinate; and this being settled, we abandoned ourselves to mirth and festivity.

CHAP. III.

From Tcherkin to Hor-Cacamoot in Ras el Feel—Account of it—Transactions there.

On the 15th of January, at a quarter past eight in the morning, we left Tcherkin, and entered immediately into thick woods; but proceeded very slowly, the road being bad and unknown, if it could be called a road, and our camels overloaded. About an hour afterwards, we passed a small village of elephant hunters on our right, and our course was straight north, through dark thick woods, overgrown with long grass, till at half an hour past ten, we came to another village close on our right. We then turned N. W. and continued in that direction, passing several villages, all of elephant hunters, and mostly Mahometans. At three quarters after twelve, we came to a small river which runs W. N. W. and falls into the Germa; here we rested. At ten minutes past one we set out again, through the thickest and most impenetrable woods I ever saw; and, at half past four, we encamped about two miles west of Amba Daid, a small village of elephant hunters, often destroyed by the Shangalla, but now lately re-built, and strengthened by Agageers and their families, under protection of Ayto Confu. We went not to the village, for the sake of a small brook which we had found here, running north, and falling into the Angrab.

On the 16th, at half after seven in the morning, we resumed our journey, going westward; about an hour and a half afterwards, we arrived at the Germa, a large river which runs N. N. W. and falls into the Angrab; and a quarter after nine, we passed the Germa, and going N. W. through the very thickest woods, came to Dabdo, a hill almost deserted, its inhabitants having been so frequently destroyed by the Pagan Shangalla.

At twenty minutes past ten, still going through the thickest woods, and ground all opened by the heat of the sun, we found, in a grassy marsh, a pretty abundant spring of foul water. This is the resort of the hunters of the elephant, as also of their rivals and enemies, the Shangalla; and here much human blood has been shed by people, whose occupation and intention, when they went from home, were that of slaying the wild beasts only. The Baasa, or Dobena Shangalla, possess the country which lies about four days journey N. E. from this.

At a quarter past eleven, we came to the river Terkwa; which, after running N. W. falls into the Angrab; it then stood in large deep pools; the banks were covered with tall green grass; the taste of the water foul, and earthy. At twelve, we passed the river Terkwa; and going north, about an hour after, we came to the Dongola, running east and west, and an hour after that to Jibbel Myrat river, which, running east and west, was once the boundary between Sennaar and Abyssinia. History does not tell us when these boundaries were altered, or upon what occasion. It was probably upon the first invasion that new ones were settled. It should seem, that the Abyssinians had then the better of Nubia; for a large accession of territory was ceded by the latter to the former. A few minutes afterwards we came to the river Woodo, larger than the last. It has a rocky bottom, and is full

of small fish of a brownish and silver colour. Where we crossed, it runs from west to east, and falls into the Angrab. There we passed the night, not without alarms, as fresh foot-steps in the sand were very plainly discovered, which, by the length of the foot, and the largeness of the heels, our people pronounced were surely Shangalla; but nothing disastrous appeared all night.

On the 17th, before seven in the morning, we were again upon our journey, our direction N. and N. W. winding to due west. Andoval mountain stood W. N. W. distant from us four miles. At forty minutes past eight, going due west, Andoval mountain lay to the north of us; and Awassa mountains to the south. This is a ridge, which, coming from the north, stretches south to Dabda, and Abra Amba. Andoval mountain is a small pointed peek, which constitutes the north end of them. We halted here a few minutes, and resumed our route to the westward, and N. W. till we came to Sancaho, at half an hour past one, and there we rested.

Sancaho is an old frontier territory of Abyssinia.—The town may consist of about 300 huts, or houses, neatly built of canes, and curiously thatched with leaves of the same. It rises in the midst of a plain, and resembles in shape Tcherkin Amba, though much larger; a considerable district all around belongs to it, of wilds and woods, if such as these, abandoned entirely to wild beasts, can be said to belong to any man. The east end slopes with rather a steep descent into the plain; and through that is a narrow winding road, seemingly the work of art, being obstructed at turns by huge stones, and at different stages, for the purpose of defence by guns, or arrows; all the other sides of the rock are perpendicular precipices. The inhabitants of the town are Baasa, a race of Shangalla,

converted to the Mahometan religion; it is an absolute government, has a nagareet, or kettle-drum, for proclamations, yet it is understood to be inferior to Ras el Feel, and dependent on it; and always subject to that nobleman, who is Kasmati of Ras el Feel, such as Ayto Confu then was, after he had resumed his government at my departure, though during my stay in Abyssinia it had devolved upon me by his surrendering it.

Gimbaro, the Erbab, or chief of Sancaho, was the tallest and stoutest man of his nation; about six feet six inches high, and strongly made in proportion; hunted always on foot; and was said, among his people, to have singly killed elephants with one blow of his spear. The features of his face might well be called hideous; he paid his part of the revenue in buffaloes hides, of which the best shields were made; and, with elephants-teeth, and rhinoceros-horns, used for the handles of the crooked knives, which the Abyssinians carry at their girdles. All the inhabitants of Sancaho are hunters of elephants. It is their principal food. Erbab Gimbaro came with Yasine, and brought more than a hundred of the Shangalla to the king's army at Serbraxos, where the Moors alleged he did not any way distinguish himself I had, however, taken considerable notice of him; and, at his earnest desire, carried him into the tent, and shewed him the king.

We encamped on the bottom of the hill on the south-west side of the town, on the banks of the river, which rises in the mountains six miles off to the south, and encompasses the half of the hill where Sancaho stands; after which it turns northward, but was now mostly dry. While we were pitching our tent, I sent one of Yasine's men to order Gimbaro to send us the usual quantity of provision for ourselves and camels,

and told him also, that my camels were few in number, and weak; desiring he would send two, or one at least, which should be stated in his deftar, on account of the rent, for that year. I was astonished to see Yasine's men return, bringing with them only a woolly-headed black, the Erbab's son, as it seemed, who, with great freedom and pertness, and in very good Amharic, said, "My father salutes you; if ye eat what he eats, ye shall be very welcome.' I asked him, "What that was?" He said, "Elephant killed yesterday; and, as for camels ye demand, he tells you he has none; elephants are his camels, and rhinoceroses are his mules."

Ayto Confu's servants, who heard this message delivered, and who were as desirous of getting over this journey to Ras el Feel as I was, advised me to go with him up the hill to the town, and expostulate with the Erbab, who, he said, would be ashamed to refuse. Accordingly, I armed myself with a pair of pistols at my girdle, with a fusil and girdle in my hand; and took with me two servants with their pistols also, each carrying a large ship-blunderbuss. We mounted the hill with great difficulty, being several times obliged to pull up one another by the hands, and entered into a large room about fifty feet long. It was all hung round with elephants heads and trunks, with skeletons of the heads of some rhinoceroses, and of monstrous hippopotami, as also several heads of the giraffa. Some large lion skins were thrown on several parts of the room, like carpets; and Gimbaro stood upright at one end of it, naked, only a small cloth about his middle; the largest man I ever remembered to have seen, perfectly black, flat-nosed, thick-lipped, and woolly-headed; and seemed to be a picture of those Cannibal giants, which we read of, as inhabiting enchanted castles, in the fairly tales.

He did not seem to take notice at my first entering the room, nor till I was very near him. He then came awkwardly forward, bowing, endeavouring to kiss my hand, which I withdrew from him, and said in a firm voice, "I apprehend, Sir, you do not know me." He bowed and said he did, but did not conceive, at the time, it was I that encamped at the brook. "You did know, sir, when you sent your son with Yasine's servant, and you know that you are considerably in my debt. Besides, if you had any gratitude, you would remember the arrears I remitted you, and the presents I made you when at Serbraxos, even though you misbehaved there. Your message to me, while below at the river, was the language of a rebel. Are you willing to be declared in rebellion?" He said, "By no means; he had always been a faithful servant to Ayto Confu, Ras Michael, and the king, and had come to Serbraxos upon receiving the first order, and would obey whatever I should command." "Then pay me the meery you owe me, and begin first by bringing two camels." He said, "he never refused the camels, and the message he sent was but in sport." "And was it sport, too, Sir," said I, "when you said you would send me the flesh of elephants to eat? Did you ever know a Christian eat any sort of flesh that a Mahometan killed?" He answered, "No;" and begging my pardon, promised he would send me bread and honey, and the camels should be ready in the morning." "They must be ready to-night," said I, "and before night, too; for I am to dispatch a servant this evening to Ayto Confu to complain of your behaviour, as I do not know what you may meditate against us in our way to Ras el Feel." He begged now, in the most earnest manner, I would not complain; and said, he would have all his spies out to the eastward, that not a Shangalla should pass to molest

us, without our being informed of them. Some of his principal people now interfering, I consented to forget and forgive what had passed. We then ate bread and drank beer, to show the reconciliation was sincere, and so the affair ended.

About six in the evening came two strong camels, and about thirty loaves of bread made of dora; two large wheat loaves for me, as also a jar of wild honey, of excellent flavour, and with these a present to Ayto Confu's servant.

On the 18th, about six in the morning, Erbab Gimbaro, coming down to our tent, brought thirty loaves of dora as before, and four of wheat, for the journey; and we had already enough of honey, upon which we breakfasted with the Erbab, who, to confirm the friendship, took two or three glasses of strong spirits, which put him into excellent humour. His son, too, that he might atone for his last night's misbehaviour, brought a better camel than any we had seen, and exchanged it for one of those that came yesterday in the evening. I, on the other hand, gave him a cotton cloth, and some trifles, which made him perfectly happy; and we parted in the most cordial friendship possible, after having made a promise that, at my return, I should stay a week at Sancaho to hunt the elephant and rhinoceros.

Before leaving Sancaho, I had an opportunity of verifying a fact, hitherto doubtful in natural history. Mr Hasselquist, the Swedish traveller, when at Cairo, saw the skins of two giraffas stuffed, which came from Sennaar. He gives as minute a description as possibly he could from seeing the skins only; but says nothing about the horns, because I suppose he did not see them; on which account the doubt remained undecided, whether the giraffa's horns were solid as the deer's, and cast every year; or whether they were

hollow, attached to a core, or bone, like those of sheep, and consequently permanent. The Count de Buffon conjectures them to be of this last kind, and so I found them. They are twisted in all respects like the horn of an antelope.

At ten minutes past eight we set out from Sancaho; but my people took it into their heads, that, notwithstanding the fair behaviour of Erbab Gimbaro, he intended to lay some ambush to cut us off, and rob us on the way. For my part, I was very well satisfied of the contrary; but this did not hinder them from forsaking the accustomed road, and getting among a thick wood of canes: we were obliged to cut our way out of them when our direction was west, or to the southward of west. They were also afraid of Abd-el-Jileel.

At ten minutes past eleven we crossed the Bedowi, which we had passed twice before; at half past eleven we crossed it again, travelling southward; and a quarter after twelve we were so entangled with woods, and so fatigued with cutting the way for our camels, that we thought we should get no further. We had, however, continued till three quarters past one in a direction south-east, at which time we were not above five miles from Sancaho; and, at half past two, had turned south-west on the banks of the large river Tokoor-Ohha, which signifies the Black River. It comes from the mountains of Awassa on the south-east, and, after winding considerably, it falls into the Guangue, about eight miles from Guanjook.

Tokoor-Ohha is a river famous for the number of buffaloes that are upon its banks, which are covered with large beautiful shady-trees, all of red-wood, called Dengui Sibber, or Breaker of Stones. They had neither fruit nor flower on them at this time, by which we might judge to what tribe they belong; but they

are not ebony, which in this country is known by the name of Zope.

On the 19th, at three quarters past six, we left our station on Tokoor river, which we crossed about a quarter of an hour after, our direction being nearly S. W. The territory here is called Gilmaber, from Gilma, a small village a mile and a half distant to the southward. Gilmaber is about a mile and a half long, full of tall canes. From the time we left Tokoor river, we had been followed by a lion, or rather preceded by one, for it was generally a small gun-shot before us; and wherever it came to a bare spot, it would sit down and grumble as if it meant to dispute the way with us. Our beasts trembled, and were all covered with sweat, and could scarcely be kept on the road. As there seemed to be but one remedy for this difficulty, I took a long Turkish rifled gun, and crawling under a bank as near as possible, shot it in the body, so that it fell from the bank on the road before us, quite dead, and even without muscular motion. It proved to be a large lioness. All the people in this country eat the flesh of lions; as I have seen some tribes * in Barbary do likewise. We left the lioness to the inhabitants of the neighbouring village, skin and all; for we were so tired with this day's journey, that we could not be at the pains of skinning her.

A few minutes after this we passed the river Gilma, twice, which runs to the northward. At half past nine we joined Dabda road, and a few minutes after crossed the Quartucca, a small river running north.

The country here becomes more open, for the thick woods have small plains between them. In the en-

* Welled Sidi Boogannim at Hydra. See Shaw's Travels.

trance of a wood we found a man that had been murdered, and that very lately, as the wild beasts had not yet begun to touch the body; he had been hamstrung, and his throat cut, a performance probably of the neighbouring Shangalla. At fifty minutes past ten, our route being west, we passed under a hill a quarter of a mile on our right, upon which is a village, called Salamgue. At a quarter past eleven we crossed the small river of Kantis; and a quarter of an hour afterwards we ascended the hill upon which stands a village of that name, inhabited by Mahometan Shangalla of the tribe of Baasa.

On the 20th we proceeded but a mile and a half; our beasts and ourselves being equally fatigued, and our clothes torn all to rags. Guanjook is a very delightful spot by the river side; small woods of very high trees interspersed with very beautiful lawns; several fields also cultivated with cotton; variety of game (especially Guinea fowls, in great abundance), and, upon every tree, perroquets, of all the different kinds and colours, compose the beauties of Guanjook. I saw no parrots, and suppose there were none; but on firing a gun, the first probably ever heard in those woods, there was such a screaming of other birds on all sides, some flying to the place whence the noise came, and some flying from it, that it was impossible to hear distinctly any other sound. It was at this place that I shot that curious bird, called the Erkoom * in Amhara; the Abba Gumba, in Tigre; and here at Guanjook, Teir el Naciba, or the Bird of Destiny.

On the 22d, at three quarters past six, we left Guanjook, and a few minutes after passed a small river,

* See the article Erkoom in the Appendix.

called Gumbaca, and afterwards the river Tokoor. At half an hour past eight we rested there, and three hours after came to the Guangue. The Guangue is the largest river we had seen in Abyssinia, except the Nile and Tacazze. It rises near Tchelga, or between Tchelga and Nara. It joins the Tacazze in the Barbara, in the kingdom of Sennaar. The two rivers, when joined, are called the Atbara, which gives its name to the province. It abounds with hippopotami, and crocodiles, chiefly the former, which, however, we thought were mostly smaller than those of the Nile.

At a quarter after one we came to Mariam-Ohha, and at half past three arrived at Hor-Cacamoot. Hor, in that country, signifies the dry deep bed of a torrent, which has ceased to run; and Cacamoot, the shade of death; so that Yasine's village, where we now took up our quarters, is called the Valley of the Shadow of Death: A bad omen for weak and wandering travellers as we were, surrounded by a multitude of dangers, and so far from home, that there seemed to be but One that could bring us thither. We trusted in Him, and He did deliver us.

Hor-Cacamoot is situated in a plain in the midst of a wood, so much only of which has been cleared away as to make room for the miserable huts of which it consists, and for the small spots of ground on which they sow mashilla, or maize, to furnish them with bread. Their other food consists entirely of the flesh of the elephant and the rhinoceros, and chiefly of the former; for the trouble of hunting the elephant is not greater than chasing the rhinoceros, and the difference of gain is much superior. The elephant has a greater quantity of better flesh, while his large teeth are very valuable, and afford a ready price everywhere. The inhabitants being little acquainted with the use of fire-

arms, the smaller game, of the deer-kind, are not much molested, unless by the wild Shangalla, who make use of bows and arrows, so that these animals are increased beyond imagination.

Ras el Feel consisted once of thirty-nine villages. All the Arabs of Atbara resorted to them with butter, honey, horses, gold, and many other commodities; and the Shekh of Atbara, living upon the frontier of Sennaar, entertained a constant good correspondence with the Shekh of Ras el Feel, to whom he sent yearly a Dongola horse, two razors, and two dogs. The Shekh of Ras el Feel, in return, gave him a mule and a female slave; and the effect of this intercourse was to keep all the intermediate Arabs in their duty.

Since the expedition of Yasous II. against Sennaar, no peace has ever subsisted between the two states; on the contrary, all the Arabs that assisted the king, and were defeated with him, pay tribute no longer to Sennaar, but live on the fontiers of Abyssinia, and are protected there. The two chiefs of Atbara, and Ras el Feel, understand one another perfectly, and give the Arabs no trouble; and, if they pay their rent to either, it is divided between both. It was through the means of these Arabs the king of Abyssinia's army was furnished, as we have seen, with heavy horses; and it was in consequence of my depending on this friendship with the Shekh of Teawa, that I attempted going through that province to Sennaar.

Some time before I left Gondar, I had been threatened with an attack of the dysentery. At my arrival at Hor Cacamoot it grew worse, and had many unpromising symptoms, when I was cured by the advice and application of a common Shangalla, by means of

a shrub called Wooginoos*, growing very common in those parts, the manner of using which he taught me.

The country, from Tcherkin to Ras el Feel, or Hor Cacamoot, is all a black earth, called Mazaga, which some authors have taken for the name of the province. However, the word Mazaga, in the language of the country, signies fat, loose, black earth, or mould, such as all that stripe of land from 13° to 16° of latitude is composed of, at least till you reach to the deserts of Atbara, where the rains end. Ras el Feel is, I suppose, one of the hottest countries in the known world. On the 1st day of March, at three o'clock in the afternoon, Fahrenheit's thermometer, in the shade, was 114°, which was at 61° at sun-rise, and 82° at sun-set. And yet this excessive heat did not make a proportional impression upon our feelings. The evenings, on the contrary, rather seemed cold, and we could hunt at mid-day. And this I constantly observed in this sultry country, that, what was hot by the glass, never appeared to carry with it any thing proportionate in our sensations.

Ras el Feel formerly paid 400 ounces of gold, which is 4000 crowns; Sancaho paid 100. But trade having decreased, since the expedition of Yasous II. to Sennaar, without the king's demand being lessened, many people have left it, and are gone to Tcherkin.

I have several times, in the course of this work, taken notice of a black nation called Shangalla, who surround all the N. N. W. and N. E. of Abyssinia, by a belt scarcely sixty miles broad. This is called by the Abyssinians, Kolla, or the Hot Country, which is likewise one of their names for hell. Two gaps, or

* See the article Wooginoos in the Appendix.

spaces, made for the sake of commerce, in this belt, the one at Tchelga, the other at Ras el Feel, have been settled and possessed by strangers, to keep these Shangalla in awe; and here the custom-houses were placed, for the mutual interest of both kingdoms, before all intercourse was interrupted by the impolitic expedition of Yasous against Sennaar. Ras el Feel divides this nation of woolly-headed blacks into two, the one west below Kuara, and bordering on Fazùclo (part of the kingdom of Sennaar), as also on the country of Agows. These are the Shangalla that traffic in gold, which they find in the earth, where torrents have fallen from the mountains; for there is no such thing as mines in any part of their country, nor any way of collecting gold but this; nor is there any gold found in Abyssinia, however confidently this has been advanced; neither is there gold brought into that kingdom from any other quarter but this we are now speaking of; notwithstanding all the misrepresentations of the missionaries to make the attempts to subdue this kingdom appear more lucrative and less ridiculous to European princes. The other nation, on the frontiers of Kuara, has Ras el Feel on the east, about three days journey from the Cacamoot. The natives are called Ganjar; a very numerous and formidable nation of hunters, consisting of several thousand horse. The origin of these is said to have been, that when the Funge (or black nation now occupying Sennaar) dispossessed the Arabs from that part of the country, the black slaves that were in service among these Arabs, all fled and took possession of the districts they now hold; where they have greatly increased in numbers, and continue independent to this day. They are the natural enemies of Ras el Feel, and much blood has been shed between them, from making inroads one upon the

other, murdering the men, and carrying their women into slavery. Yasine, however, had become too strong for them, by the assistance of Ayto Confu, and they had offered to assist the king at the campaign of Serbraxos. But they were found not fit to be trusted, so were sent away, under pretence that they should attack Coque Abou Barea, governor of Kuara for the rebels, and hinder him from coming to their assistance; and even this they did not do.

The title of their chief is Sheba, which signifies the Old Man. His residence is called Cashumo, by his own people; and Dendy Kolla, by the Abyssinians of Kuara. Yasine, however, was now at peace with them, without which our journey would scarce have been possible. Sheba sent his son to see me at Ras el Feel; we thought, at that time, he came as a spy. However, when we departed I gave him a small present; and we swore mutual friendship, that he was to be ready always to fight against my enemies, and that we were to act kindly by each other, though we were to meet, horse to horse, alone in the desert.

Yasine had done every thing, on his part, to secure me a good reception from Fidele, Shekh of Atbara. Every assurance possible had been given, and I had before travelled some thousand miles upon much slighter promises, which had, however, been always faithfully kept; so that I did not at all suspect that any thing unfair could be intended me at Teawa, where Fidele resided. But as the loss of life was the consequence of being mistaken, I never did omit any means to double my security.

Mahomet Gibberti, as we have before observed, had already carried a letter of mine from Gondar to his master Metical Aga, Selictar to the Sherriffe of Mecca in Arabia, requesting that he would write to

some man of consideration in Sennaar, and taking it for granted that I was then arrived at Teawa, desire that a servant of the king might be sent to give me safe conduct from that frontier to the capital. Yasine had written to the same effect, directly to Sennaar, and sent a servant of his, who, for security sake, had nothing but the letter and an old ragged cloth about his waist; and he had long ago arrived at Sennaar, the before-named place of his destination.

Among the tribes of Arabs that were protected by Yasine, and furnished with pasture, water, and a market for their cattle, and milk and butter, at Ras el Feel, were the Daveina, by much the most powerful of all the Arabs in Atbara; but they ventured no further southward than Beyla, for fear of the troops of Sennaar.

The Shekh of Beyla was a man of very great character for courage and probity. His name was Mahomet; and I had often corresponded with him upon the subject of horses for the king while I was at Gondar. He was greatly tormented with the stone, and by means of Yasine I had several times sent soap-pills, and lime, with directions how to make lime-water. I therefore sent a servant of mine with a letter to the Shekh of Beyla, mentioning my intention of coming to Sennaar by the way of Teawa and Beyla, and desiring him to forward my servant to Sennaar, to Hagi Bilal, my correspondent there; and, at the same time, write to some other friend of his own, to see that the king's servant should be dispatched to Teawa without delay. This servant, with the letters, I committed to the care of the Shekh of the Daveina, who promised that he would himself see him safe into Beyla; and, by a particular providence, all these letters and messengers arrived safe, without miscarriage of one, at the places

of their destination, though we were long kept in suspence before they took effect.

I was now about to quit Ras el Feel for ever, in a firm persuasion that I had done every thing man could do to insure a safe journey and good reception at Sennaar, till one day I received a visit from Mahomet Shekh of Nile; which does not mean Shekh of the river, but of a tribe of that name, which is but a division of the Daveina. To this Shekh I had shewn a particular attention in several trips he had made to Gondar, in consequence of which he was very grateful and anxious for my safety. He told me, that he saw I was setting out perfectly content with the measures I had taken for my safety at Sennaar, and he owned that they were the best that human prudence could suggest; "but," says he, "in my opinion, you have not yet been cautious enough about Teawa. I know Fidele well, and I apprehend your danger is there, and not at Sennaar." He then drew a most unfavourable picture of that Shekh, whom he affirmed to have been a murderer and a thief all his days, and the son of a father no better than himself; that he was of no religion, neither Mahometan, Christian, nor Pagan, but absolutely without fear of God; he said, however, he believed him to be a great coward; and therefore the whole of my safety reduced itself to this, Was he really afraid of Yasine, or not? If he was, that became the best handle we could lay hold on; but if, on the contrary, he was not afraid of Yasine, or was persuaded, as he very well might be by wicked people about him, that, when once I was out of the country, Yasine took no further charge of me, he doubted very much I should never pass Teawa, or, at least, without suffering some heavy affront or ill-usage, the extent of which it was impossible to determine.

These sensible suggestions made a very strong impression on Yasine and me; Yasine's first position was, that Fidele was certainly afraid to disoblige him; but, allowing the possibility he was not, he owned he had not substituted any second measure to which I could trust. We all regretted that our friends the Daveina had been suffered to depart without taking me with them by Sim-Sim and Beyla; but it was now too late, as the Daveina had for some days arrived at the station the nearest Beyla and the farthest from us. It was then agreed, that Nile should send a relation of his, who was married in one of the tribes of Jehaina Arabs, encamped upon Jibbel Isriff, near to Teawa, with whom Fidele was at that time making peace, lest they should burn the crop about the town. This man was not to enter the town of Teawa with me, but was to come there the next day, as if from his friends at Jibbel Isriff; and, if I then informed him there was danger, should return to the Jehaina, mount a hajan or dromedary, and give Yasine information with all possible speed. All this being now settled, I prepared for my journey; having first, by many observations by night and day, fixed the latitude of Hor-Cacamoot to be 13° 1′ 33″ north.

CHAP. IV.

From Hor-Cacamoot to Teawa, Capital of Atbara.

It was on the 17th of March that we set out from Hor Cacamoot on our journey to Teawa, capital of the province of Atbara. Our course was N. N. W. through thick brushwood, with a few high trees; our companions being eleven naked men with asses loaden with salt. We had several interruptions on the road. At three in the afternoon we encamped at Falaty, the east village of Ras el Feel, a little to the northward. A small mountain, immediately north from this village, the one end of which is thought to resemble the head of an elephant, gives the name to the village and the province *. This mountain stretches in a direction nearly north and south, as do the villages, and the small river when it has water, but it was now apparently dry. However, by digging pretty deep in the sand, the water filtering through the sides of the holes filled in a certain time with a putrid, ill-tasted, unwholesome beverage, which is

* Ras el Feel signifies the head of an elephant.

all this miserable village has for its use. The people look sickly and ill-coloured. Falaty is three miles and a half distant from Hor-Cacamoot; its name interpreted is, Poverty, or Misery.

On the 18th, at half after six in the morning, we continued our journey through thick, and almost impenetrable woods, full of thorns; and in two hours we came to the bed of a torrent, though in appearance dry; and, upon digging with our hands in the loose sand, we found great plenty of fresh water exceedingly well tasted, being sheltered by projecting rocks from the action of the sun. This is called Surf el Shekh. Here we filled our girbas; for there is very little good water to be found between this and Teawa.

A girba is an ox's skin squared when raw, and the edges sewed together very artificially by a double seam, which does not let out water, much resembling that upon the best English cricket-balls. An opening is left in the top of the girba, in the same manner as the bung-hole of a cask. Around this the skin is gathered to the size of a large handful, which, when the girba is full of water, is tied round with whip-cord. These girbas generally contain about sixty gallons each, and two of them are the load of a camel. They are then all besmeared on the outside with grease, as well to hinder the water from oozing through, as to prevent its being evaporated by the action of the sun upon the girba; which in fact happened to us twice, so as to put us in imminent danger of perishing with thirst.

Yasine had provided a camel and two girbas, as well as every other provision necessary for us, till we should arrive at Teawa. Surf el Shekh is the boundary of Ras el Feel. Here I took an affectionate leave of my friend Yasine, who, with all his at-

tendants, shewed, at parting, that love and attachment they had constantly preserved to me since our first acquaintance.

Soliman, my old and faithful servant, who had carried my first letter to Sennaar, though provided for in the king's service, insisted upon attending me to Sennaar, and dying with me if it should be my fate; or else gaining the reward which had been promised him, if he brought back the good news of my safe arrival and good reception there. At parting I gave the faithful Yasine one of my horses and my coat of mail, that is, my ordinary one; for the one that was given me by Ozoro Esther had belonged to king Yasous, and it would have been an affront to have bestowed it on a common man like Yasine, who, besides, was a Mahometan, so I gave it (with Ozoro Esther's consent) to Ayto Engedan, king Yasous's grandson. Before parting, Yasine, like an old traveller, called the whole company together, and obliged them to repeat the Fedtah, the Prayer of Peace.

At half past seven in the evening we came to Engaldi, a large bason or cavity, several hundred yards in length, and about thirty feet deep, made for the reception of water by the Arabs, who encamp by its side after the rains. The water was almost exhausted, and what remained had an intolerable stench. However, flocks of Guinea fowls, partridges, and every sort of bird, had crowded thither to drink, from the scarcity of water elsewhere. I believe, I may certainly say, the number amounted to many thousands. My Arabs loaded themselves in a very little while, killing them with sticks and stones; but they were perfectly useless, being reduced to skeletons by hunger and thirst. For this reason, as well as that I might not alarm any strolling banditti within hearing, I did not suffer a shot to be fired at them.

At eight we came to Eradeeba, where is neither village nor water, but only a resting-place about half a mile square, which has been cleared from wood, that travellers, who pass to and from Atbara, might have a secure spot whence they could see around them, and guard themselves from being attacked unawares by the banditti sometimes resorting to those deserts.

At a quarter past eleven we arrived at Quaicha, a bed of a torrent where there was now no water; but the wood seemed growing still thicker, and to be full of wild beasts, especially lions and hyænas. These do not fly from man, as those did that we had hitherto seen, but came boldly up, especially the hyæna, with a resolution to attack us. Upon our first lighting a fire they left us for a time; but toward morning they came in greater numbers than before; a lion carried away one of our asses from among the other beasts of burden, and a hyæna attacked one of the men, tore his cloth from his middle, and wounded him in his back. As we now expected to be instantly devoured, the present fear overcame the resolution we had made, not to use our fire-arms, unless in the utmost necessity. I fired two guns, and ordered my servants to fire two large ship-blunderbusses, which presently freed us from our troublesome guests. Two hyænas were killed, and a large lion being mortally wounded, was dispatched by our men in the morning. They came no more near us; but we heard numbers of them howling at a distance till day-light, either from hunger or the smarts of the wounds they had received, perhaps from both; for each ship-blunderbuss had fifty small bullets, and the wood towards which they were directed, at the distance of about twenty yards, seemed to be crowded with these animals. The reason why the hyæna is more fierce here than in any part of Bar-

bary, will be given in the natural history of wild beasts in the Appendix.

Though this, our first day's journey from Falaty and Ras el Feel to Quaicha, was of eleven hours, the distance we had gone in that time was not more than ten miles; for our beasts were exceedingly loaded, so that it was with the utmost difficulty that either we or they could force ourselves through those thick woods, which scarcely admitted the rays of the sun. From this station, however, we were entertained with a most magnificent sight. The mountains at a distance towards the banks of the Tacazze, all Debra Haria, and the mountains towards Kuara, were in a violent bright flame of fire.

The Arabs feed all their flocks upon the branches of trees; no beast in this country eats grass. When therefore the water is dried up, and they can no longer stay, they set fire to the woods, and to the dry grass below it. The flame runs under the trees, scorches the leaves and new wood, without consuming the body of the tree. After the tropical rains begin, the vegetation immediately returns; the springs increase, the rivers run, and the pools are filled with water. All sorts of verdure being now in the greatest luxuriancy, the Arabs revisit their former stations. This conflagration is performed at two seasons; the first, by the Shangalla and hunters on the southern part of this woody country, begins in the month of October, on the return of the sun, the circumstances of which I have already mentioned; the latter, which happens in March, and lasts all April, besides providing future sustenance for their flocks, is likewise intended to prevent, at least to diminish, the ravages of the fly; a plague of the most extraordinary kind, already described.

We left Quaicha a little before four in the morning of the 19th of March, and at half an hour past five we came to Jibbel Achmar, a small mountain, or rather mount; for it is of a very regular form, and not above 300 feet high, but covered with green grass to the top. What has given it the name of Jibbel Achmar, or the Red mountain, I know not. All the country is of red earth about it; but as it hath much grass, it should be called Jibbel Achdar, the Green Mountain, in the middle of the red country; though there is nothing more vague or undetermined than the language of the Arabs, when they speak of colours. This hill, surrounded with impenetrable woods, is in the beginning of autumn the rendezvous of the Arabs Daveina, when there is water; at which time the rhinoceros, and many sorts of beasts, crowd hither; though few elephants, but they are those of the largest kind, mostly males; so that the Arabs make this a favourite station, after the grass is burnt, especially the young part of them, who are hunters.

We reached Imserrha at half past eleven, the water being about half a mile distant to the S. W. The wells are situated upon a small ridge that runs nearly east and west; at one extremity of this small-pointed mountain, upon which was formerly a village belonging to the Arabs, called Jehaina, now totally destroyed by the hunting parties of the Daveina, the great tyrants of this country, who, together with the scarcity of water, are the principal causes that this whole territory is desolate. For, though the soil is sandy and improper for agriculture, yet it is thickly overgrown with trees; and were the places where water is found sufficiently stocked with inhabitants, great numbers of cattle might be pastured here, every species of which live upon the leaves and the young

branches of trees, even on spots where grass is abundant.

On the 20th, at six o'clock in the morning, we set out from Imserrha, and in two hours arrived at Rashid, where we were surprised to see the branches of the shrubs and bushes all covered with a shell of that species of univalve called Turbines, white and red; some of them from three to four inches long, and not to be distinguished by the nicest eye from those sea-shells, of the same species, which are brought in great quantities from the West India islands, especially St Domingo.

How these came first in a sandy desert, so far from the sea, is a disquisition I shall not enter now into. There are of this fish great numbers in the Red Sea, and in the Indian Ocean; how they came upon the bushes, or at the roots of them, appears more the business of the present narrative. To confine myself to the matter of fact, I shall only say, that throughout this desert are many springs of salt-water; great part of the desert is fossile salt, which, buried in some places at different depths, according to the degree of inclination of all minerals to the horizon, does at times in these fountains appear very near the surface. Here I suppose the seed is laid, and, by the addition of the rain-water that falls upon the salt during the tropical rains, the quantity of salt-water is much increased, and these fishes spread themselves over the plain as in a temporary ocean. The rains decrease, and the sun returns; those, that are near springs, retire to them, and provide for the propagation of future years. Those that have wandered too far off in the plains, retire to the bushes, as the only shelter from the sun. The intense heat at length deprive them of that shade, and they perish with the leaves to which they crept for shelter; and this is the reason that we saw

such a quantity of shells under the bushes. That we found them, otherwise, alive in the very heart of the springs, we shall further circumstantiate in our Appendix, when we speak of mussels so found, in our history of the formation of pearls.

Rashid was once full of villages, all of which are now ruined by the Arabs Daveina. There are seven or eight wells of good water here, and the place itself is beautiful beyond description. It is a fairy land, in the middle of an inhospitable, uninhabited desert; full of large wide spreading trees, loaded with flowers and fruit, and crowded with an immense number of the deer kind. Among these, we saw a large one, like the antelope, his buttocks (a considerable way up his back) being covered with white, which terminated upon his thigh in a black line, drawn from the haunch down very nigh to the joint of his hind leg. These we had never seen before. They are called Ariel in Arabia, go in large flocks, are exceedingly swift; though, from the necessity of coming to water, and its only being found in particular places, they were an easy victim to those that watched for them at night.

Sim-Sim is a copious spring, which supplies a large basin the Arabs have dug for it near thirty feet deep. It lies west of Rashid, or a little to the southward of west. It is in a sandy desert, in the direct way to Beyla and Sennaar; and here the Daveina kept their flocks, equally secure from the fly and the troops of Sennaar, the two great enemies they have to fear; and, being in the neighbourhood of Ras el Feel, they keep a large market there, supplying that country amply with provisions of all kinds, and getting from it, in return, what they have not in their own district.

We were just two hours in coming to Rashid, for we were flying for our lives; the Simoom, or hot-wind, having struck us not long after we had set out from Imserrha, and our little company, all but myself, fell mortally sick with the quantity of poisonous vapour that they had imbibed. I apprehend, from Rashid to Imserrha it is above five miles; and, though it is one of the most dangerous halting-places between Ras el Feel and Sennaar, yet we were so enervated, our stomachs so weak, and our head-achs so violent, that we could not pitch our tent, but each wrapping himself in his cloak, resigned himself immediately to sleep, under the cool shade of the large trees, invited by the pleasant breeze from the north, which seemed to be merely local, confined to this small grove, created probably by the vicinity of water, and the agitation we had occasioned in it.

In this helpless state to which we were reduced, I alone continued not weakened by the simoom, nor overcome by sleep. A Ganjar Arab, who drove an ass laden with salt, took this opportunity of stealing one of the mules, together with a lance and shield belonging to one of my servants. The country was so woody, and he had so much advantage of us in point of time, and we were in so weak and discouraged a state, that it was thought in vain to pursue him one step. So he got off with his booty, unless he was intercepted by some of those wild beasts, which he would find every where in his way, whether he returned to Ras el Feel, or the frontiers of Kuara, his own country.

Having refreshed ourselves with a little sleep, the next thing was to fill our girbas, or skins, with water. But, before we attempted this, I thought to try an experiment of mixing about twenty drops of spirit of nitre in a horn of water about the size of an ordinary

tumbler. This I found greatly refreshed me, though my head-ach still continued. It had a much better effect upon my servants, to whom I gave it; for they all seemed immediately recovered, and their spirits much more so, from the reflection that they had with them a remedy that they could trust to, if they should again be so unfortunate as to meet this poisonous wind, or vapour.

On the 21st. we set out from Rashid at two o'clock in the morning, and, at a little past eight, arrived at Imhanzara, having gone mostly N. W. to north and by west. This, too, is a station of the Arabs Daveina; and there had been large pools of water, the cavities, apparently dug by the hands of men, being from twenty to thirty feet deep, and not less than sixty yards long. The water was just then drying up, and stood only about half a foot in depth, in the bottom of one of the pools. The borders of the basons were thick set with acacia and jujeb-trees; but the fruit of the latter was drying upon the stones, and had fallen shrivelled in great quantities upon the ground. We gathered about a couple of pecks, which was a very great refreshment to us. The fruit, though retaining a very sharp acid taste, is mixed with a sweetness not unlike the tamarind; and which it communicated to water, upon a handful of the dry fruit being steeped therein for half an hour. The ordinary jujeb in Barbary is oblong, like an olive; this is perfectly round, like the cherry, but something smaller. The tree is thorny, and differs in nothing from the other, but only in the shape of the fruit. When dried, it is of a golden colour; and is here called Nabca, being the principal sustenance of the Arabs, till these pools are dry, when they are obliged to seek other food, and other water, at some more distant station.

lake. Having set my musket at my hand, near and ready, I levelled my blunderbuss at the middle of the group, which were feeding voraciously, like as many swine, with a considerable noise, and in a civil war with each other; two of them fell dead upon the spot; two more died about twenty yards distance; but all the rest that could escape fled without looking back, or shewing any kind of resentment: I then took my musket in my hand, and stood, prepared with my bayonet, behind the tree, but fired no more, not knowing what their humour, or disposition, might be as to a return upon an accession of new companions.

About twenty small foxes, and a flock of several hundred Guinea-fowls, now came up from the inside of the pool. The fowls lighted immediately, and ran back again to the water. The foxes retired quickly into the woods. Whether they had assembled with a view of getting a share of the deer, an animal of this kind being generally attendant upon the lion, or whether, as is most likely, they were seeking the Guinea-fowls, I do not know. I suspect it was the latter, by their number; for never more than one at a time is remarked to accompany the lion.

We observed a variety of traps and cages, some of them very ingenious, which the Daveina, or other Arabs, had set to catch these birds, several of which we found dead in these snares, and some of them had not yet been touched by beasts; and as there was but a small distance between the traps and the water's edge, which could only be answerable to a few days evaporation, we, with great reason, inferred, that the Daveina, or some other Arabs, had been there a very short time before. We found in the mud of the pool large green shell-snails, with the animals alive in them; some of them weighed very near a pound, in nothing, but

size and thickness of the shell, different from common garden-snails.

Not a little alarmed at this discovery that the Arabs were near us, we left Imhanzara at four o'clock in the evening of the 21st, our journey mostly N. W.; at eight we lost our way, and were obliged to halt in a wood. Here we were terrified to find that the water in our girbas was entirely gone; whether by evaporation of the hot wind, or otherwise, I know not; but the skin had the appearance of water in it, till its lightness in unloading discovered the contrary. Though all the people were sick, the terror of being without water gave us something like alacrity, and desire to push on. We set out at eleven, but still wandered in the wood till three o'clock in the morning of the 22d, when we were obliged again to alight. I really then began to think we were lost. I ordered the girbas to be examined: a large one, which we had filled at Rashid, was entirely empty; and that one which we had partly filled at Imhanzara, on account of the badness of the water, had not much more in it than what kept liquid the mud which had been taken up with it. This, however (bad as it was), was greedily guzzled up in a moment. The people, who conducted the asses, seeing that we had skins to contain plenty of water for us, had omitted to fill the small goat-skin which each of them carried. A general murmur of fear and discontent prevailed through our whole company; for we could have no guess at the nearness or situation of the next well, as we had lost our road; and some of the caravan even pretended that we had passed it. But, though we had travelled thirteen hours, I cannot compute the distance to have been above fourteen miles.

This day, being the sixth from Ras el Feel, at half after five in the morning, we set off in great despon-

dency; and, upon the first dawn of day, I set our route by the compass, and found it north and by west, or more easterly. This did not seem the probable road to Sennaar, after having gone so considerably to the north-west. But, before I could make much reflection upon the observation, one of the caravan declared he knew the road, and that we had gone very little out of it, and were now proceeding sraight to the well. Accordingly, at half past nine we reached it; it is called Imgellalib*. There is great plenty of water, with a leather-bucket, and a straw rope to draw it up, but it is very ill-tasted. However, the fear of dying with thirst, more than having materially suffered from it, made every one press to drink; and the effect of this hurry was very soon seen. Two Abyssinian Moors, a man and woman, died after drinking; the man instantly, and the woman a few minutes after; for my own part, though thirsty, I was sensible I could have held out a considerable time without danger; and, indeed, I did not drink till I had washed my head, face and neck, all over. I then washed my mouth and throat, and, having cooled myself, and in great measure assuaged my thirst, I then drank till I was completely satisfied, but only small draughts. I would have persuaded all my companions to do the same, but I was not heard; and one would have thought, like the camels, they had been drinking once for many days to come. Yet none of them had complained of thirst till they heard the girbas were empty; and it was not sixteen hours since they had drunk at Imhanzara, and but twelve since the girbas were found to

* The word signifies the Well of Caravans: I suppose of those which, like ours, bring salt into Atbara, for there is no other trade between the two nations.

be dry, when we first lost our way, and stopped in the wood.

The extensive, and very thick forest, which had reached without interruption all the way from Tcherkin, ended here at Imgellalib. The country is perfectly flat, and hath very little water. The forest, however thick, afforded no sort of shade; the hunters, for the sake of their sport, and the Arabs, for destroying the flies, having set fire to all the dry grass and shrubs, which, passing with great rapidity, in the direction of the wood from east to west, though it had not time enough to destroy the trees, did yet wither, and occasion every leaf that was upon them to fall, unless in those spaces where villages had been, and where water was. In such spots a number of large spreading trees remained full of foliage, which, from their great height, and being cleared of underwood, continued in full verdure, loaded with large, projecting, and exuberant branches. But, even here, the pleasure that their shade afforded was very temporary, so as to allow us no time for enjoyment. The sun, so near the zenith, changed the azimuth so rapidly, that every few minutes I was obliged to change the carpet on which I lay round the trunk of the tree, to which I had fled for shelter; and, though I lay down to sleep, perfectly screened by the trunk, or branches, I was presently awakened by the violent rays of a scorching sun, the shade having passed beyond me; and this was particularly incommodious, when the trees, under which we placed ourselves, were of the thorny kind, very common in those forests. The thorns, being all scattered round the trunk upon the ground, made either changing-place, or lying, equally uneasy; so that often, however averse we were to fatigue, with the effects of the simoom, we found, that pitching the head of our tent, and sometimes the whole of it, was the only pos-

sible means of securing a permanent protection from the sun's oppressive heat. In all other places, though we had travelled constantly in forests, we never met with a tree that could shade us for a moment, the fire having deprived them of all their leaves.

> ——————— Latè tibi gurgite rupto
> Ambitur nigris Meroe fœcunda colonis,
> Læta comis hebeni; quæ quamvis arbore multa
> Frondeat, æstatem nulla sibi mitigat umbra,
> Linea tam rectum mundi ferit illa leonem.
>
> LUCAN.

Having refreshed ourselves for near two hours by the enjoyment of this water at Imgellalib, and raked a sufficient quantity of sand over the dead bodies of our two companions, for piety and decency rather than for use, we abandoned them to the hyænas, who had already smelled the mortality, and were coming, two and three together, at the distance of a long shot from the well where we were then drinking. We set out at eleven, our road being through a very extensive plain; and, at two in the afternoon, we alighted at another well, called Garigana; the water was bad, and in small quantity. In this plain is situated the principal village of Atbara, called Teawa. The thermometer slung under the camel, in the shade of the girba of water, had yet, nevertheless, varied within these three hours from 111° to 119½.

At five o'clock we left Garigana, our journey being still to the eastward of north; and, at a quarter past six in the evening, arrived at the village of that name, whose inhabitants had all perished with hunger the year before; their wretched bones being all unburied and scattered upon the surface of the ground where the village formerly stood. We encamped among the bones of the dead; no space could be found free from

them; and, on the 23d, at six in the morning, full of horror at this miserable spectacle, we set out for Teawa: this was the seventh day from Ras el Feel. After an hour's travelling we came to a small river, which still had water standing in some considerable pools, although its banks were perfectly destitute of any kind of shade.

At three quarters after seven in the evening we arrived at Teawa, the principal village and residence of the Shekh of Atbara, between three and four miles from the ruins of Garigana. The whole distance, then, from Hor-Cacamoot, may be about sixty-five miles to Teawa, as near as I then could compute; that is, from Hor-Cacamoot to Rashid, thirty-two miles; and from Rashid to Teawa, thirty-three miles; but Rashid from Hor-Cacamoot bears N. W. and by W. and the latitudes are:

Teawa,	lat.	14° 2′ 4″ N.
Hor-Cacamoot,		13° 1′ 33″
Difference, lat.		1° 0′ 31″

The difference of longitude is then but five or six miles; so that Teawa is very little to the westward of due north from Hor-Cacamoot, and nearly in the same meridian with Ras el Feel, which is four miles west of Hor-Cacamoot. From Imhanzara to Teawa, but especially from Imgellalib, we went always to the eastward of north. From Teawa we observed the following bearings and distances:

Beyla, W. S. W. about 28 miles at farthest.
Hasib, S. and by W.

Jibbel Imsiddera, S. about 8 miles, where is good water.

Mendera, N. 48 miles; indifferent water from deep wells.

Rashid, S. nearly 33 miles; plenty of good water all the year.

Jibbel Isriff, E. N. E. about three miles; water.

Jibbel Attash and Habharras, W. and by N. between 50 and 60 miles.

Sennaar W. and by N. as far as we could guess about 70 miles.

Guangue River, from 14 to 16 miles due east.

Derkin, E. N. E. about 27 miles.

At Garigana, several of our caravan, with their asses and loading of salt, left us, either afraid of entering Teawa, or because their friends dwelt at Jibbel Isriff, where the clan of Jehaina were then encamped; being afraid of the Arabs Daveina, who, the preceding year, had destroyed all the crops and villages that belonged to them, or rather reaped them for their own advantage. The whole tribe of Jehaina is greatly their inferiors in all respects, and as by assembling upon Jibbel Isriff, a low though very rugged ridge of hills, abounding in water, where the pits in which they hide their grain were, and where, too, they had deposited the principal of their effects, they had given this pledge of mutual assistance to the inhabitants of Teawa, in case of an attack from those great destroyers, the Daveina.

The Daveina being Arabs, who constantly live in tents, bear a mortal enmity to all who inhabit villages, and, as occasion offered, had destroyed, starved, and laid waste the greatest part of Atbara. They had been outlawed by the government of Sennaar for having joined Yasous II. upon the expedition against

that kingdom. They had ever since been well received by the Abyssinians, lived independent, and in perpetual defiance of the government of Sennaar. They had often threatened Teawa, but had given the Shekh of Beyla an assurance of friendship ever since Yasine had married a daughter of that Shekh.

The strength of Teawa was about 25 horse, of which about ten were armed with coats of mail. They had about a dozen of firelocks, very contemptible from the order in which they were kept, and still more so from the hands that bore them. The rest of the inhabitants might amount to 1200 men, naked, miserable, and despicable Arabs, like the rest of those that live in villages, who are much inferior in courage to the Arabs that dwell in tents: weak as its state was, it was the seat of government, and as such a certain degree of reverence attended it. Fidele, the Shekh of Atbara, was reputed by his own people a man of courage; this had been doubted at Sennaar. Welled Hassan, his father, had been employed by Nasser the son, late king of Sennaar, in the murder of his father and sovereign Baady, which he had perpetrated, as I have already mentioned. Such was the state of Teawa. Its consequence was only to remain till the Daveina should resolve to attack it, when its corn-fields being burnt and destroyed in a night by a multitude of horsemen, the bones of its inhabitants, scattered upon the earth, would be all its remains, like those of the miserable village of Garigana.

I have already observed, in the beginning of the journey, that the Shekh of the Arabs, Nile, who resided in Abyssinia, near Ras el Feel, since the expedition of Yasous, had warned me, at Hor-Cacamoot, to distrust the fair promises and friendly professions of Shekh Fidele, and had, indeed, raised such doubts in

my mind, that had not the Daveina been parted from Sim-Sim (or the confines of Abyssinia), though there would have been a risk, that if, coming with that tribe, I should have been ill received at Sennaar, I nevertheless would have travelled with them, rather than by Teawa; but the Daveina were gone.

The Shekh of Atbara, having no apparent interest to deceive us, had hitherto been a friend as far as words would go, and had promised every thing that remained in his power; but, for fear of the worst, Nile had given us a confidential man, who was related to the Jehaina and to the principal Shekh of that tribe. This man conducted an ass, loaded with salt, among the other Arabs of the caravan, and was to set off to Ras el Feel upon the first appearance of danger, which he was to learn by coming once in two days, or oftner, either to Teawa, where he was no farther known than as being one of the Jehaina, or to the river where my Soliman was to meet him at the pools of water; but his secret was only known to Soliman, myself, and a Greek servant, Michael. From leaving Hor-Cacamoot, he had no personal interview with me; but the night, when we were like to perish for thirst in the wood, he had sent me, by Soliman, privately, a horn-full of water, which he had in his goat's skin, and for which I had rewarded him handsomely in the instant, glad of that opportunity of confirming him in his duty.

This man we sent off to Jibbel Isriff, as a stranger, with orders not to come to us till the third day; for we were well-persuaded, whatever the end was to be, that our first reception would be a gracious one. Indeed we were all of us inclined to believe, that our suspicions of Fidele, Shekh of Atbara, and of his intentions towards us, were rather the effects of the fear that Shekh Nile had infused into us, than any apprehen-

sion which we could reasonably form after so many promises; at the same time, it was agreed on all hands, that, life being at stake, we could not be too careful in providing means that could, if the worst happened, at the least diminish our risk.

CHAP. V.

Transactions at Teawa—Attempts of the Shekh to detain the Author there—Administer Medicines to him and his Wives—Various Conversations with him, and Instances of his Treachery.

At the passage of the small river, about a quarter of a mile from Teawa, we were met by a man on horseback, clothed with a large, loose gown of red camlet, or some such stuff, with a white muslin turban upon his head, and about 20 naked, beggarly servants on foot, with lances, but no shields; two small drums were beating, and a pipe playing before them. He stopt upon my coming near them, and affected a delicacy in advancing to salute me, he being on horseback, and I upon a mule; for my horse was led behind, saddled and bridled, with a loose blue cloth covering him. Soliman, who first accosted him, told him it was the custom of Abyssinia not to mount horses but in time of war, upon which he immediately dismounted, and, upon seeing this, I alighted likewise. We saluted one another very courteously. He was a man about 70, with a very long beard, and of a very graceful appearance. It was with the utmost difficulty I could prevail upon him to mount his horse, as he declared his intention was to walk by the side of my mule till he entered the town of Teawa. This being

over-ruled, by an invincible obstinacy on my part, he was at last constrained to mount on horseback, which he did with an agility only to be expected from a young man of twenty.

Being mounted, he shewed us a variety of paces on horseback. All this, too, was counted a humiliation and politeness on his part; as playing tricks, and prancing on horseback, is never done but by young men before their elders, or by meaner people before their superiors. We passed by a very commodious house, where he ordered my servants to unload my baggage, that being the residence assigned for me by the Shekh. He and I, with Soliman on foot by the side of my mule, crossed an open space of about 500 yards, where the market is kept; he protested a thousand times by the way, what a shame it was to him to appear on horseback, when a *great man* like me was riding on a mule.

A little after, having passed this square, we came to the Shekh's house, or rather a collection of houses, one storey high, built with canes; near the street, at entering, there was a large hall of unburnt brick, to which we ascended by four or five steps. The hall was a very decent one, covered with straw mats; and there was in the middle of it a chair*, understood to be the place of the grand signior. The Shekh himself was sitting on the ground for humility's sake, reading the Koran, or pretending to read it. At our entry he seemed to be surprised, and made an attempt as if to rise up, which immediately I prevented him

* It is the custom in all places where the governor is invested with supreme power, to have an arm-chair left empty in the middle of the hall where justice is administered, which represents the sovereign, and to which obeisance is made.

from doing, holding him down by the hand, which kissed.

I shall not fatigue the reader with the uninteresting conversation that passed at this first interview. He affected to admire my size and apparent strength, introduced some loose hints about Abyssinian women; and in general, pretended to blame me for exposing myself to travel in such a country. In return, I complained of the extreme fatigue of the journey and heat, the beasts of prey, the thick woods without shade, the want of water, and above all, the poisonous blasts of the simoom that had almost overcome me, the effects of which I was at that instant feeling.

He then blamed himself very politely, in a manner natural to the Arabs, for having suffered me to come to him before I had reposed myself, which he excused by his desire of seeing so *great* a man as me. He said also, that he would detain me no longer; bid me repose a day or two in quiet and safety; and upon my rising to go away, he got up likewise, and holding me by the hand, said, "The greatest part of the dangers you have passed in the way are, I believe, as yet unknown to you. Your Moor, Yasine, of Ras el Feel, is a thief worse than any in Habesh. Several times you escaped very narrowly, by mere chance, from being cut off, especially at Rashid, by the Arabs Daveina, whom Yasine had posted there to murder you. But you have a clean heart, and clean hands. God saw their designs, and protected you; and I may say also, on my own part, I was not wanting."

Being then on my legs for retiring, I returned no answer, but the usual one (Ullah Kerim), *i. e.* God is merciful. Soliman, on the other side, echoed "*Ullah Kerim!*" by which I saw he understood me. We both went out, and were conducted to the apartment provided by the old man in the red cloak, who met us on

our first arrival at the river, and who now walked before me till we came to the house. It was a very decent one, consisting only of one large room, and stood close upon the river. This situation was chosen with an intention to keep open the correspondence with the Shekh of Nile's servant, whom we had sent to the Jehaina, and who occasionally was to meet us there; but Soliman told the old man, it was necessary to me, on account of frequent ablutions before prayer, which my religion obliged me to perform. This old man was called Hagi Soliman Kaiya, that is, the Shekh's lieutenant. He had been at Mecca, and had seen Metical Aga, and knew his post and consequence; but he was a murderer and robber, like his master, a liar and dissembler beyond all conception.

We had scarce taken possession of our lodging, or thrown off our clothes to put ourselves at our ease, when several slaves of both sexes brought us a quantity of dishes of meat from the Shekh, with many flattering compliments and good wishes. The whole was dispatched very speedily, and some of our poor companions of the caravan, with the salt, came and helped us very thankfully, without ceremony, as is the custom of the country. When all was over, I was astonished at one young man, who came and put his mouth close to my ear, saying these few words in Arabic, "Seitan Fidele! el Shekh el Atbara Seitan!" *i. e.* Fidele is a devil! the Shekh of Atbara is the devil himself!

All strangers were now dismissed, under pretence of our going immediately to repose. We had, indeed, much need of rest in our present situation, but still more of council, for which we immediately assembled by ourselves. After having shut the door, I asked Soliman what he thought of the Shekh of Atbara, and his discourse? He answered, without hesitation, "He

is a traitor, has deceived Yasine, and means you ill." The word, *great man*, so often applied to me: the abuse bestowed upon Yasine, whom, in his letters, he had called his dear brother; the wondering that I came that way, after, in his letters, and by his servants, he had so often persuaded us, while at Ras el Feel, that it was the best, nay, the only road possible; all this, united together, seemed to leave us no doubt but that we had fallen into a trap, from which our own activity and resolution, under the protection of Providence, could alone release us.

It may be remembered that, some time before our setting out from Ras el Feel, I had dispatched a servant with the Daveina to Sennaar, whom they were to escort as far as Beyla; and they had consigned him into the hands of Mahomet, Shekh of Beyla, who was to forward him to Sennaar; and this he certainly would have done immediately without delay, but for a misfortune that happened, and entirely disconcerted the plan. The Daveina, on their way to Beyla, had heard, that an encampment of Arabs (who usually, at this time, occupy the banks of the Nile) had come eastward towards Atbara. Whether the Daveina intended to attack these Arabs, or were afraid the Arabs intended to fall upon them, I know not; but they returned westward to the left, instead of coming to Beyla; they sent my servant forward, after some loss of time, and Mahomet, Shekh of Beyla, had forwarded him to Sennaar. Here, too, he was detained by Shekh Adelan, the first minister, who happened then not to be at Sennaar, but levying taxes upon the Arabs. This we did not know at that time; so every moment we expected his arrival. We were disappointed, likewise, in not finding a servant of the Shekh of Beyla waiting for us, who was to inform us of the situation of the country about Beyla. This we more wondered at,

because, being ill of the gravel, he had expressed himself very anxious, in his letter to Yasine, to have some lime-water, which his servant was to get from me at Teawa. We did not then know, as we soon afterwards did, that this servant had been waiting for us at Teawa, and that Shekh Fidele had informed him, that I was no longer coming by Atbara, but that Coque Abou Barea had sent me, under the care of some Ganjär horse, straight down the Dender from Kuara; so that the Shekh of Beyla did not expect to see me.

All this being unknown to us, we were in constant expection of servants from Sennaar, and the message from the Shekh of Beyla. But, as we all agreed we were in danger, we resolved, the next day, at meeting Shekh el Nile's servant, to dispatch him to Ras el Feel, requiring Yasine to send some person, as from the king or Ayto Confu, to ask the reason of our being detained, and to be a witness of the Shekh's behaviour and our departure. In the mean time, we determined to make our interviews with him as few as possible, till some assistance should arrive. Soliman met the Shekh el Nile's servant, and gave him the letter he was to carry to Yasine, explaining himself to the Arab by word of mouth.

On the night of the 24th of March, the day after our arrival, our dispatch set off from Jibbel Isriff for Ras el Feel; where he arrived safely, but found Yasine was gone to Ayto Confu at Tcherkin, else he would certainly have been the first to bring us comfort, for he had executed his commission with great fidelity. This day I had staid in the house, being ill of the simoom; but had sent to Fidele, to let him know I should wait upon him next day, having as yet given him no present, and being desirous to know what effect they might have.

On the 25th, at four o'clock, I waited upon the

Shekh accordingly, in his own house. Soliman the Moor, Hagi Ismael the Turk, who, besides, was a sheriffe, and my Greek servant, were along with me. I gave the Shekh, for a present, a large piece of blue Indian cotton cloth, with gold flowers, a silk and cotton sash, about two ounces of civet, two pounds of nutmegs, and ten pounds of pepper. He received the presents very graciously to appearance, and laid all the articles down beside him. I desired that he would dispatch me as soon as possible, and, for that end, be preparing the camels. He answered, the camels were fifteen days journey off, in the sandy desert, for fear of the flies; but that the want of them should not detain us, if he had leave from Sennaar, for which he was to write that night. He added, that they always were exceedingly tedious at Sennaar, and both the town and road were, at present, in a very unsettled state. I told him, I was surprised at this, as Hagi Belal had written to Yasine and myself also, in a letter (then in my custody), that orders were gone both to him and the Shekh of Beyla, to receive me kindly, and forward me safely and speedily to Sennaar: that he himself had confessed this to Yasine in a letter written to him from Teawa, desiring that I would come speedily, as he had every thing ready, which letter I myself had read. Fidele seemed in the utmost surprise at this. He lifted up his hands and eyes, as if I had been telling the greatest of lies. He said, "he never wrote a letter about me to Yasine in his life; or, at least, not this year; that it was all a forgery of Yasine, knowing that I had a quantity of gold with me, to get me out into the desert to rob and murder me there; that I might see he never could receive such orders, or else it would have been as much as his life was worth, not to have prepared to dispatch me immediately; but, so far from that, says he, seek

all over the town, and if you find one camel, or any other number, I will make you a present of them all, for this is entirely a forgery of Yasine."

Soliman could bear this no longer. He told Fidele, "That it was he who was a forger and a liar, not Yasine. Will you persuade me that I do not know of your letter to Yasine? Have not your servants, Ibrahim and Nasser, lived with us at Ras el Feel for weeks together as bearers of these letters, which I have seen in their hands before reading, and also read them afterwards? Was I not speaking to them both this morning about the letters? And are not they just now waiting without? If you have a mind to call them in, and question them, do it now before me. What do you think Yasine will say when he hears of the fine character you give him?" "Soliman," replies the Shekh, in a very soft tone of voice, "I may have forgotten, in the many letters and affairs that pass through my hand in a day; but Yasine is my brother, and I will do every thing for him and you that you could wish: stay only this week, and, if my camels do not arrive, I will send and take them from the Arabs, wherever they can be found. They are for the king's business, and not mine." He said this with such an air of candour and sincerity, that it was impossible to doubt him.

On the 26th in the forenoon, I went to see the Shekh; I sat a few minutes with him, then rose to go away. He then inquired if I had any thing particular to ask? I answered, "I had nothing but to pay my compliments to him." He paid me a very civil bow, and I took my leave. Next day, the 27th, I staid in the house all day, it being the Shekh's festival. In the evening, the old man, who was the Kaiya, came to my house with compliments from the Shekh. He told me, Fidele was often ill with complaints in the

stomach, and hinted, that it was from excessive drinking. He wished that I would give him some medicine to vomit him, and restore his appetite, which he had perfectly lost. The old man added, that this was the way to make the Shekh do what I wished, sooner than all the presents in the world. I told him, that he might assure Fidele, that I both could, and would do him that service, and for that purpose would wait upon him at six o'clock next evening.

On the 28th, in the evening, I went to the Shekh's house with the medicine, and it answered all our expectations. I observed, however, when the cup with the ipecacuanha was in his hands, that they trembled, and also his under lip. He was apparently at that time under some apprehension, which his conscience suggested, of what it was in my power to do to him. In these countries, they have an emetic, which they take occasionally, which operates so violently, that it often throws them into convulsions. What it may be, I know not. Some say it is the small seed of a flower like the poppy; some, the pith of a tree, after it has been dried and rubbed into a fine powder with the hand; whatever it may be, it is so severe in proportion to the strongest dose of ipecacuanha, that the latter seemed but like a sport in comparison. The ease that warm water occasioned, which he had never before experienced, was so unexpected, that he could hardly be satisfied with drinking. After this was over, all was thankfulness, and promises of doing whatever I should desire of him, provided I would administer two or three dozes more to him; and, if he forwarded me quickly, leave him some of the powder, with directions how to take it in my absence. This I engaged faithfully to do, and we parted apparently the best friends in the world.

The 29th, early in the morning, before sun-rise, I

had a message from him again by the Kaiya, to whom I gave coffee at the door while I was dressing. He told me, the Shekh was wonderfully well, and never in such health and spirits in his life; but desired that I would come to him in the evening, for two of his wives were ill of the same disorder that he had. I excused myself, under pretence that it was Sunday, my festival, and that I never went out upon any business.

This excuse passed as to the Shekh; but at noon a black common slave came down with a message from her mistress, who thought the answer given to the Kaiya was a refusal. They said, they were sorry if I had not meat to my liking; that they dressed it with their own hands every day, in the best manner possible, but they would alter it in any respect I chose, if I would instruct them. I soon found how necessary it was to content my benefactresses. I explained my answer to the Shekh about Sunday; but assured them, that on Monday evening I should be with them, to vomit them till they were perfectly satisfied; in the mean time, I took a small cup, which I filled with civet, and sent it by the slave to her mistresses; giving likewise, at the same time, two handfuls of pepper for herself.

On the 30th, in the evening, I went to the Shekh's house, according to promise, and was carried into a large room, where he was sitting alone, smoking in an alcove; I suppose meditating future mischief, for he had no other apparent employment. He was perfectly sober, however, and seemed rather thoughtful; was very civil, and thanked me in an unusual strain of kindness, for the care I had taken of his family. I asked him if he was recovered? He declared, he had never been so well in his life, as since I had given him the last vomit; but that he had received very bad

news from Sennaar; that Mahomet Abou Calec (the first minister) had taken the greatest part of the horse and troops, and was gone to Kordofan, a very distant province, surrounded with deserts, where he governed independently, and by his manners and discourse seemed resolved to withdraw himself from his duty to the king; that Shekh Adelan, his younger brother, with the remaining troops, had left Sennaar, and was encamped at Aira, a few miles from the town, where he too governed despotically by his own will; it being the prerogative of the minister to have absolute power as soon as he has left the capital, and put himself at the head of the army, for levying the tax from the Arabs; but that he had parted with the king on terms very little short of rebellion. He then said "Since this is the case, that Providence has thrown your lot here, that you cannot go forward to Sennaar, nor back to Abyssinia, if you will resolve to stay with me, and turn Mahometan, which is the only true religion, I will give you my daughter for your wife, and you shall be second man in the government of Teawa; and as my intention is to go next year to Mecca, you shall then be appointed to the government of Atbara, while I go to Sennaar, and procure an office fitter for an old man."

Although I seldom in my life was less inclined to merriment, I affected to break out into a loud fit of laughter; at which he looked grave, seeming to take it ill, and asking me if I laughed at him? "Exactly so," said I, "at you; I was laughing to think that a man set over a province to govern it, like you, should yet know so little of mankind, as to imagine one like me capable of turning renegado. You may deny it for some purpose of your own, but I know you are well informed of the degree of favour and honour in which I was whilst in Abyssinia, where I had every thing

that I desired. They were people of my religion, and yet I never would consent either to stay with them, or marry among them. What then could be my inducement to marry here, to change my religion, and live in a country where there is nothing but poverty, misery, famine, fear, and dependence?" "Hearken," says he, "you are a fool; this country is a thousand times healthier and sweeter than Abyssinia; but, since you won't take my advice, I shall say no more. Come and see my Harem *." "With all my heart," replied I, "as far as that I will go; and shall be happy to do both you and your family all the good I can."

The Shekh went before me, through several apartments, well proportioned, but very meanly furnished, slovenly, and in bad order. This was the part of the house that belonged to himself, and formed one side of a square. We crossed the square to the opposite side, where there were several apartments furnished in a much better style. The floors were all covered with Turkey carpets. In an alcove sat one of his wives upon the ground, with a number of black slaves about her. Her face was uncovered; the circle made way for me; so that, first putting my hand to my lips, I touched the end of her fingers with the end of mine. In the mean time, the Shekh had brought a second wife from another apartment, and set her down beside the first. They were both women past the middle age, seemed to have a great many slaves attending them, but never had been handsome. One of them, I learned afterwards, was daughter to the first minister, Shekh Adelan.

I thought it necessary to explain myself a little with Fidele. "You know, Shekh," said I, "it is not al-

* The house where they keep their women.

ways that you and I agree, and though I have lived many years with people of your religion of all ranks, yet I am far from knowing what are the manners of Atbara; what will offend you or them, or what not; for, as I have no view but your good and theirs, I would not expose myself to any ill usage to which a mistake of your customs may subject me. In short, I must ask these ladies a number of questions, which, if you choose to hear, you may, but no person else must, as is the custom of my country." "What has he to do with us and our physician?" said the eldest of the two; "all his business is to pay you money when you have made us well." "What would become of him," says Adelan's daughter, "if we were to be ill? he would starve for want of people to make ready his meat." "Aye," and his drink too," says the other, "which he is fonder of than his meat." "No, no," says Shekh Fidele, in perfect good humour, "we know you Hakim; you are not like us; ask them all the questions you please, I neither wish nor intend to hear them; I hear too much of them every day against my will, and only wish to God you would cure them, or make them dumb altogether, and then they will not teaze me with their illness any longer; a sick woman is plague sufficient for a devil." "Then, clear the room," said I, "in the first place, of all these idle women servants; only leave two or three of the steadiest slaves to serve their mistresses." He did not seem at a loss how to do this; for he took up a short whip, or switch, which lay at hand, and happy were they who got first to the door. I saw among these a genteel female figure, covered from head to foot, whom Fidele pulled in with his hand, after he had pushed the others out of the door, saying, "Come in Aiscach;" and immediately after this he went away.

I was very sensible that I was playing a farce upon which a very great deal depended. Though in these countries the daughters of ministers and great men are given to inferiors, this is only with a view of having them provided for; they are spies upon their husbands, and keep up the consequence of their birth in their husband's house, even after they are married; and this I understood was precisely the case with Adelan's daughter. Notwithstanding the bad character I had of Fidele, I knew he durst not rob me, without murdering me also; and I was sure he did not dare to do either, if it was once known that I was arrived in the dominions of Sennaar; and this his wife could inform Adelan, her father, of, whenever she pleased. This was then the first step towards safety.

I shall not trouble my reader with a repetition of my medical inquiries, nor the complaints of ladies, which are properly secrets with me, though at the distance of Atbara. The ipecacuanha operation gave high satisfaction. It was now happily terminated; but, whilst it was administering, I observed the figure, who till then appeared covered, had unveiled her face and head down to her shoulders; and soon after one of the slaves, her attendant, as in play, pulled off the remaining part of the veil that covered her. I was astonished at the sight of so much beauty. Her hair, which was not woolly, but long, and in great quantity, was braided and twisted round like a crown, upon the top of her head, ornamented with beads, and the small white Guinea-shells, commonly known here by the name of blackamoor's teeth. She had plain rings of gold in her ears, and four rows of gold chain about her neck, to which was hung a number of sequins pierced. The rest of her dress was a blue shift, which hung loosely about her, and covered her down to her feet, though it was not very rigorously nor very close.

ly disposed all below her neck. She was the tallest of the middle size, and not yet fifteen years of age; her whole features faultless; they might have served alone for the study of a painter all his life, if he was in search of absolute beauty. Her mother being an Arab of the tribe of Jehaina, her complexion was a dark brown. Such was the beautiful Aiscach, daughter of the eldest of the ladies that I was then attending.

Neither sickness nor medicine could prevent those who were present from discovering plainly how exceedingly I was disconcerted. Adelan's daughter said to me, "You will think nothing of the women in Atbara, after so long a stay in Abyssinia; but the women in Europe, they say, are so white, they are the handsomest of all." "I never was less persuaded of that truth than at present," said I; "and I see perfectly you observe it." "Aye, aye," says her mother, "and so we do. If Aiscach was ill, you would take better care of her than of either of us." "Pardon me," said I, "madam; if the beautiful Aiscach was ill, I feel I should myself be so much affected as not to be able to attend her at all."

Aiscach made the most gracious inclination with her head, to shew she was perfectly sensible of the compliment. The women laughed out aloud. "Send for Yasine and your horse from Ras el Feel," cries a voice behind me, laughing, but speaking perfect good Amharic; "take her away, and carry her back with you to Abyssinia; I'll go with you with all my heart, and so will she, I swear to you." I turned with surprise to the person that spoke the language, which I had not heard spoken of late. "She is a poor Christian slave," says the eldest of Fidele's wives, "taken by the Jehaina, when the Mek Baady was defeated in his return to Sennaar; she is a foolish, but merry

creature, as you see." All our diet and regimen being settled, I took my leave, and was attended to the door by the Abyssinian slave and Aiscach, who seemed to be very much her friend. When she came to the outer door, she covered herself again with her veil, from head to foot, as before, saying, in a low voice, "Shall we not see you to-morrow?"

On the 31st of March, Fidele again insisted upon undergoing another experiment of the ipecacuanha. I waited upon him at the same hour as before, curious to know what he would say to me about his wives. Upon my inquiring after them, he only answered, that they were well; and when coffee was brought, before I went away, told me, "that he knew perfectly well, from Ras el Feel, that, when I set out from thence, I had disposed, in various boxes and chests (which I pretended were instruments), 2000 ounces of gold, besides variety of cloth of gold, and other valuable things for presents; and as all this was now in his power, he could not think me mad enough to refuse him 500 piastres, which were only 50 of these ounces I carried with me; that, if I gave them to him civilly, he would forward me to Sennaar in two days; if not, I was in his hands, and he could easily take the whole by force, and after dispose of me as he pleased."

"Well done! out with it," said I; "this is but what I knew long to be in your heart. But let me set you right; I have not three ounces of gold in all my possession. It is of no use to me in my country; take all my cases and boxes, and search them; the gold that you find there I freely give you, and without reserve. As for the cloth of gold, which I have, it is a present from the king of Abyssinia to the king of Sennaar, to be delivered with his letter. I have likewise a present to Shekh Adelan, with a letter to him; and some other trifles for Sennaar, to people in govern-

ment: look at them; if you think they are too great, apply to your own use what part of them you please, and account with the king and Adelan for what you take from them, with your reason for so doing. The little money I may want at Sennaar, Hagi Belal, Metical Aga's servant from Mecca, will furnish me with, and, upon my letter, will take payment for the amount from my countrymen on board the East India ships at Jidda. As for force, do not deceive yourself; if all those cases were gold, it never would be in your power to open one of them. Do not think that I am a girl or a child; consider the danger and difficulties I have passed, under God's protection only, and by my own force and courage: I am well armed, and have brave men about me, so try your force when you please. I dare say you will keep yourself out of danger, to give an account of your brave exploit to the king of Sennaar afterwards." I then arose, and said, "Good evening." The Shekh called after me to stay. I said, "Another time;" and immediately left him.

We had hitherto been supplied plentifully with provisions from the Shekh's house once a-day. When I came home at night, I found that after Magrib, which is after sunset, a large store had been sent by the ladies from the Shekh's house, as acknowledgments for the attention I had paid them; but no particular message, except that they had been exceedingly well after their medicines, and hoped I would not abandon them, but see them again. A Greek servant of mine, who knew perfectly their customs, had answered, that I certainly would wait upon them when the Shekh would desire me so to do.

The weather was extremely hot, and people, avoiding sunshine of the day, generally sat up the whole of the night, enjoying the only hours when it was possible to breathe freely. It was about elven o'clock at

night, when the old Kaiya, whom I never saw but upon these occasions, came to me for coffee, of which he drank at least twenty dishes every visit. He appeared at first very moderate, and, as he pretended, a friend. But immediately afterwards, being seated, and assuming a new kind of air and tone of voice, he reproved me roundly for my behaviour to the Shekh that day. He extolled him highly for his generosity, courage, and his great interest at Sennaar from his father's merits, and from his having married Shekh Adelan's daughter. He said, it was the greatest presumption, in a set of infidels like us, to behave in the manner we had done to Fidele that day. "Hagi Soliman," answered I, "you are an old man; if years have not given you wisdom, your journey to Mecca, and conversation with persons of all nations there, should at least have taught you an appearance of it, which, at this time, you have not. I am here, immediately under the protection of the sherriffe of Mecca, the chief of your religion, and Metical Aga his minister. I have letters from the king of Abyssinia to your king of Sennaar, requesting only, under the faith of nations, to pass through your country in my way to Cairo, to rejoin Ali Bey, whose physician I am, and in whose hands at least 3000 subjects of Sennaar, and their effects, are at this moment I say to you now, as I did to your master in the morning, that he cannot either rob or murder me at Teawa without all your nation being responsible for it, wherever they shall go. But I am not a sheep, or a lamb, to be spoiled of my goods, or robbed of my life, without defending myself to the utmost; and I tell you, for your proper instruction, that there are probably now at Sennaar people from the king of Abyssinia, complaining of my being detained here, and demanding justice."

He seemed to pay no attention to this threat. He

did not think it possible that I could have had any communication with Ras el Feel since I came to Teawa, but declared, "that, as my particular friend, he had calmed the Shekh's wrath, and obliged him to promise, that, for 2000 piastres, he would dispatch me in two days to Sennaar." "Indeed, Hagi Soliman," said I, "I have not 20 piastres in the world to give either him or you, nor would I give them if I had them. The Shekh may take all that I have by force, and is welcome to try the experiment. You, as his friend and soldier, may command the party, if you please; but I am resolved, were he willing, never to leave Teawa till I depart under the conduct of another man than one of your or Shekh Fidele's choosing." Upon my saying this, he arose, shook the bosom of his cloak, and said, he was sorry for it; but he washed his hands of all the consequences.

Immediately after this we shut our doors; and our fire-arms being cleaned, loaded, and primed, we resolved to abide the issue of this bad affair in the best manner possible, and live or die together. One thing, however, diverted us: One of the large blunderbusses being accidentally laid across the door, this veteran soldier started back at the sight of it, and, although the muzzle was pointed far from him, would not enter till the piece was removed, and placed at a considerable distance from him.

As we saw things were growing to a crisis, we became every hour more impatient for the arrival of relief, either from Ras el Feel or Sennaar. On the 1st of April came a servant from the Shekh of Beyla, and delivered a message to Fidele: What it was I know not; but about noon he came to inquire after us, and pay us a visit.

All this time Fidele had kept our arrival at Teawa a secret from the Shekh of Beyla; but the people,

who frequented the market of Teawa, having told their governor that they had seen strangers there, he all at once suspected the truth, and dispatched a confidential servant to Fidele, under a shew of business, to inquire whether we were those strangers. An explanation immediately followed upon his coming to my house, and especially concerning the message the Shekh of Beyla had received from the Shekh of Atbara, that we were gone by Kuara down the Dender. He said, that his master either had sent, or intended to send, advice of this to my servant at Sennaar, who, expecting us no longer by Teawa, would neither come himself, nor seek a king's servant to conduct us from hence, but would seek measures for our safety the other way, or wait at Sennaar, expecting our arrival daily; for the way from Kuara was through a number of outlawed, or banditti, Arabs, so that it was not in the power of the government of Sennaar, if ever so well inclined, to conduct us one step in safety on that road till we should be within two days journey of Sennaar. The servant therefore proposed, that he should return instantly to Beyla (as he did that night), and that his master should send a messenger on a dromedary express to Sennaar, to inform Hagi Belal of our situation, and procure immediate relief. He promised further, that his master should send a Moullah (or man of extraordinary holiness and learning), in whose presence Shekh Fidele would not dare to proceed to extremities; as this was a man universally esteemed, and of great weight and reputation at Sennaar, both with Abou Calec and Adelan, as well as throughout Atbara.

I must here obviate a very reasonable objection which may be made by my reader:—"Why, when you knew your safety depended upon the government of Sennaar, when you was arrived at Teawa, did you

not take the first opportunity of notifying it to Fidele, that you had already sent to acquaint your correspondent at Sennaar that you had set out for that place?" I answer, "That to do this had been many times in agitation among us, but was always rejected. It was thought a dangerous measure to leave a man like Fidele, the only person who had seen us, to give us any character and description he pleased, who, from the connection and corespondence he must have in that capital, and the confidence necessarily placed in him as governor of a frontier province, might so far prejudice the minds of that credulous and brutal people, by misrepresenting us, as either to get orders to cut us off upon our journey, or procure us a fate similar to that of M. du Roule, the French envoy, after our arriving in that capital." It was by the goodness of Providence alone that we were restrained from adopting that measure, often considered as the most adviseable, but which, we since have certainly known, would have ended in our destruction.

Nothing material passed on the 3d of April, their festival day; but on the 4th no meat was sent us. However, on Sunday, the 5th, it was brought rather in larger proportion than before, and we spent the whole day in conjecturing what was become of our servants, and of the Moullah whom the Shekh of Beyla's servant had promised us. On the 6th the Kaiya came, and, without ceremony, told me that the Shekh had heard I wanted to escape to Beyla, in which journey I should certainly perish, and therefore he had taken my horse from me, which was in a stable at some distance. From this time we got our victuals very sparingly. On the 7th he sent me word, that I should bring him a vomit the day after, which I promised to comply with. It was very plainly seen the Shekh of Beyla's secret was not kept, and to this we attributed

the delay of the Moullah; but nothing could comfort us for the want of an answer from Ras el Feel.

On the 8th, in the evening, a little before six o'clock, when I was making ready to go to the Shekh, a message came, that he was busy, and could not see me; with which, for a time, I was very well pleased. About ten arrived a naked, very ill-looking fellow, more like an executioner than any other sort of man, with a large broad-sword in his hand, and seemingly very drunk. He said he was one of the Shekhs of Jehaina, and in a little time became extremely insolent. He first demanded coffee, which was given him, then a new coat, then some civet, and, last of all, drawing his sword, that we should instantly provide him with a new scabbard, his own being but a piece of common leather, which he threw with a kind of indignation down upon the floor. Till that time I had been writing these very memoirs; at least the journal of the day. I was not any way afraid of one drunkard, but laid down my pen, wondering where this insolence was to end. Before I had time to speak a word, I heard my old Turk, the sherriffe, Hagi Ismael, say, "You are of the Jehaina, are you; then I am of the Daveina;" and with that he caught the stranger by the throat, taking his sword from him, which he threw out of the house, after casting the owner violently upon the floor. The fellow crept out upon all-four, and, as soon as he had picked up his sword, attempted again to enter the house, which Soliman perceiving, snatched his own short, crooked knife from a pin where it hung, and ran readily to meet him, and would very speedily have made an end of him, had I not cried out, "For God's sake, Soliman, don't hurt him; remember where you are." Indeed there was little reason for the caution; for when the Arab observed a drawn sword in the Turk's hand, he presently ran

away towards the town, crying, "Ullah! Ullah! Ullah!" which was God! God! God! an exclamation of terror, and we saw no more of him; whilst, instead of a new scabbard, he left his old one in the house. Seeing at once the cowardice and malice of our enemies, we were now apprehensive of fire, things were come to such an extremity; and as our house was composed of nothing but dry canes, it seemed the only obvious way of destroying us.

On the 9th in the morning, I sent Soliman with the scabbard to Fidele, and a grievous complaint against the supposed Shekh of the Jehaina for his insolence the night before. Shekh Fidele pretended to be utterly ignorant of the whole, made light of what had passed, and said the fellow was a fool. But a violent altercation took place between him and my servant black Soliman, who then told him all his mind, threatening him with Yasine's immediate vengeance, and assuring him he was, before this, fully informed of his behaviour. They, however, both cooled before parting. Fidele only recommended to Soliman to persuade me to give him 2000 piastres, without which he swore I never should go alive out of Atbara. Soliman on the other hand, declared, that I was a man that set no value upon money, and therefore carried it not about with me, otherwise I should not refuse what he desired, but warned him to think well before he uttered such expressions as he now had done.

In the course of conversation, as Soliman told me, the Shekh gave him several hints, that, if he would agree with him, and help to rob and murder me, he should share the booty with him, and it never should be known. But Soliman pretended not to understand this, always assuring him that I was not the man he took me for; and that, except the king's present, all I had was brass, iron, and glass bottles, of no value to

any but myself, who only knew how to use them. They then finished their discourse; and he desired Soliman to tell me, that he expected me at the usual hour of 6 o'clock to-morrow evening, which was Friday the 10th.

This seemed to me to be an extraordinary appointment, because Friday is their festival, when they eat and drink heartily, nor did I ever remember any of them take medicine upon that day. But with Fidele all was festival; not even their annual solemn fast of Ramadan did he ever keep, but was universally known to be an unbeliever, even in what was called his own religion. I had still this further objection to wait upon him at night, that he had gone so far as to solicit Soliman to assist him in murdering me. But I considered at last, that we could not escape from his hands; and that the only way to avoid the danger was to brave it. Providence, indeed, seemed all along to have reserved our deliverance for our own exertions, under its direction, as all the ways we had taken to get relief from others had hitherto, in appearance at least, miscarried. However, it was resolved to go armed, for fear of the worst; but to conceal our weapons, so as to give no umbrage. I had a small Brescian blunderbuss, about 22 inches in the barrel, which had a joint in the stock, so that it folded double. It hung by an iron hook to a thin belt under my left arm, close to my side quite unperceived, like a cutlass. I likewise took a pair of pistols in my girdle, and my knife as usual. All these were perfectly covered by my burnoose; so that, with a little attention when I sat down, it was impossible to discover my having any weapons about me. Hagi Ismael the Turk, Soliman my servant, and two other Moorish servants, took also their fire arms, small and great, and swords, along with them. We all went to the house of the Shekh

a little before seven o'clock in the evening. I entered the back door into the square where the womens house was; but declined going so far as their apartment without leave, turning to the left hand into the side of the square where he usually staid. I was surprised to meet but one servant, a black boy, in the whole house, and he carried me to the Shekh, my servants remaining at the outer-door.

Fidele was sitting in a spacious room, in an alcove, on a large broad sofa like a bed, with India curtains gathered on each side into festoons. Upon seeing the boy, in a very surly tone he called for a pipe; and, in much the same voice, said to me, "What! alone?" I said, "Yes, what were his commands with me?" I saw he either was, or affected to be, drunk, and whichever was the case, I knew it would lead to mischief; I therefore repented heartily of having come into the house alone.

After he had taken two whiffs of his pipe, and the slave had left the room, "Are you prepared?" says he; "have you brought the needful along with you?" I wished to have occasion to join Soliman, and answered, "My servants are at the outer door, and have the vomit you wanted." "D—n you and the vomit too," says he with great passion, "I want money, and not poison. Where are your piastres?" "I am a bad person," said I, "Fidele, to furnish you with either. I have neither money nor poison; but I advise you to drink a little warm water to clear your stomach, cool your head, and then lie down and compose yourself; I will see you to-morrow morning." I was going out. "Hakim," says he, "infidel, or devil, or whatever is your name, hearken to what I say. Consider where you are; this is the room where Mek Baady, a king, was slain by the hand of my

father: look at his blood, where it has stained the floor, which never could be washed out. I am informed you have 20,000 piastres in gold with you; either give me 2000 before you go out of this chamber, or you shall die; I will put you to death with my own hand." Upon this he took up his sword that was lying at the head of his sofa, and, drawing it with a bravado, threw the scabbard into the middle of the room; and, tucking the sleeve of his shirt above his elbow, like a butcher, said, "I wait your answer."

I now stept one pace backwards, and dropt the burnoose behind me, holding the little blunderbuss in my hand, without taking it off the belt. I said, in a firm tone of voice, "This is my answer: I am not a man, as I have told you before, to die like a beast by the hand of a drunkard; on your life, I charge you, stir not from your sofa." I had no need to give this injunction; he heard the noise which the closing the joint in the stock of the blunderbuss made, and thought I had cocked it, and was instantly to fire. He let his sword drop, and threw himself on his back on the sofa, crying, "For God's sake, Hakim, I was but jesting." At the same time, with all his might, he cried, "Brahim! Mahomet! El coom! El coom*!"—"If one of your servants approach me," said I, "that instant I blow you to pieces; not one of them shall enter this room till they bring in my servants with them; I have a number of them armed at your gate, who will break in the instant they hear me fire."

The women had come to the door. My servants were admitted, each having a blunderbuss in his hand and pistols at his girdle. We were now greatly an overmatch for the Shekh, who sat far back on the

* El coom, that is, all his servants.

sofa, and pretended that all he had done was in joke, in which his servants joined, and a very confused, desultory discourse followed, till the Turk, sherriffe Ismael, happened to observe the Shekh's scabbard of his sword thrown upon the floor, on which he fell into a violent fit of laughter. He spoke very bad Arabic, mixed with Turkish, as I have often observed. He endeavoured to make the Shekh understand, that drunkards and cowards had more need of the scabbard than the sword; that he, Fidele, and the other drunkard that came to our house two or three nights before, who said he was Shekh of the Jehaina, were just possessed of the same portion of courage and insolence.

As no good could be expected from this expostulation, I stopt it, and took my leave, desiring the Shekh to go to bed and compose himself, and not try any more of these experiments, which would certainly end in his shame, if not in his punishment. He made no answer, only wished us good-night.

CHAP. VI.

Transactions at Teawa continued—A Moullah and Sherriffe arrive from Beyla—News from Ras el Feel and Sennaar—An Eclipse of the Moon—Leave Teawa.

We went to the door, through the several apartments, very much upon our guard; for there was no person to light us out, and we were afraid of some treachery or ambush in the antichamber and dark passages; but we met nobody; and were, even at the outer gate, obliged to open the door ourselves. Without the gate there were about twenty people gathered together, but none of them with arms; and, by the half words and expressions they made use of, we could judge they were not the Shekh's friends. They followed us for a little, but dispersed before we arrived at our house. Soliman, my servant, told me by the way, that the Moullah was arrived, and that the Shekh of Beyla's servant, who had come with him, had been at my house ever since I went to Fidele's. Accordingly we found him still there, and explained to him what had happened, and the great distress we had been in from the Moullah's not arriving sooner, as also from receiving no message either from Sennaar or Ras el Feel. He told us, the reason of our servants not joining us was the false information his mas-

ter, the Shekh of Beyla, had received from Fidele, that we were coming by the Dender, and not by Teawa, as already mentioned. He now advised us to come up, and shew ourselves in the morning to the Moullah, who would be sitting with Shekh Fidele administering justice; but to take no particular notice of him, and only observe to what his discourse pointed, and he would bring us word if any thing more was necessary.

I recommended to this servant of the Shekh of Beyla, that he should tell the Moullah that he was not to expect I was to open my baggage here, but that I was a man who understood perfectly the value of a favour done me, and should not be in his debt longer than arriving at Beyla, which I wished to reach as soon as possible; nothing can be quicker than these people are on the smallest hint given; we separated fully satisfied that we were now a sufficient match for the Shekh, even at his own weapons.

Ever since the adventure of the Shekh of the Jehaina, one of us had kept guard, the door being open every night for fear of fire, and it was my turn that night, a post that I never declined, for the sake of good example; but my spirits were so exhausted this day, that I gave the old Turk plenty of coffee and tobacco to undertake, as he did with great willingness, the office of that night for me. I went to bed, and fell presently into a profound sleep, from which I was awakened, a little before midnight, by a message from the ladies, my patients, in the Shekh's house, sent by the black slave that had spoken in the Abyssinian language to me while I was attending her mistress. They advised me to be upon my guard, for the Shekh was absolutely resolved to take a severe revenge upon us all; that after we had left him that

evening, an express arrived from the lower part of Atbara, giving him an account that Shekh Ibrahim, a great man at Sennaar, and favourite of Adelan the prime minister, while he was employed in gathering the taxes from the Arabs, had fought with the tribe called Shukorea, somewhere east of Sennaar; that he had been completely beaten, and many of his people killed; as also, that Shekh Ibrahim and his two sons were wounded; that Shekh Fidele had immediately sent back word, that he had then with him a surgeon and physician, meaning me, who could, upon occasion, even bring a dead man to life, but that I would never consent to come to him unless I was forced; therefore, if he would dispatch a sufficient number of armed men, to help him to surprise me in the night, he would conduct the execution of that scheme, and would send me to him in irons. He said I was an infidel, a white man from Abyssinia, and had several stout people expert in fire arms, (of which I had a number), who would be of great use to him in subduing the Arabs. They assured me, however, of their friendship, and begged me to consider what I had to do in time, for many wild men would be poured in upon me, who would not fail to kill me if I resisted.

I returned my most humble thanks to my kind informants; with a small gratification of civet to the two elder ladies, and a separate portion to the beautiful Aiscach, assuring them I should not fail to profit by any advice they should give me. After this I again fell into a sound sleep, which continued till morning; and, though my affairs had not the most prosperous appearance, I felt a calmness of mind, to which I had been utterly a stranger ever since I had left Ras el Feel. My servants awakened me in the morning of the 11th; I drank coffee, and dressed, and took along

with me Soliman and Ismael, without arms in our hands, but having knives and pistols in our girdles, to shew that we had lived in fear.

The Moullah's name was Welled Meftah, or the son of interpretation, or explanation. He was reputed to have attained such a degree of holiness as to work miracles, and, more than once in his life, to have been honoured with the conversation of angels and spirits, and, at times, to have called the devil into his presence, and reproved him. He was a man below the middle size, of a very dark complexion, and thin beard, seemingly past sixty, hollow-eyed, and very much emaciated. If holy, we could not say he was the beauty of holiness. I understood, afterwards, he was much addicted to the use of opium, to the effects of which he probably was indebted for his conversation with spirits. He had brought with him another saint, much younger and robuster than himself, who had been several times at Mecca, and had seen Metical Aga, but did not know him. He had seen likewise the English ships at Jidda, and knew the name of the nation, but nothing more. He was a sherriffe (that is, a descendant of Mahomet), a degree of nobility much respected among the Arabs, distinguished by wearing a green turban. The Daveina, when they burnt all the country between Teawa and Beyla, saved this man's house, effects, and crop, in veneration of his sanctity. These two were sitting on each side of Shekh Fidele, and before him stood two black slaves, holding each a monstrous long broad-sword. I approached these powers, ecclesiastical and civil, with great composure, as if nothing had happened; but Ismael, the Turk had almost spoiled my gravity; for, seeing the swords in the men's hands before Fidele, he said, in his barbarous language, loud enough to be heard, "O, ho,

they have got their scabbards upon their swords to-day."

Fidele seemed to have a very serene countenance, till we approached nearer, when, seeing the pistols in our girdles, he appeared rather discomposed, and probably he thought the blunderbuss was not far off; I made him, however, a bow, and shook him by the hand; I likewise made another bow to their two holinesses. As people of that sanctity seldom choose to have even their clothes touched by unbelievers in public, I made no further advance towards them.—The sherriffe no sooner saw Ismael's turban, than he got up, took him in his arms, and, as he was an older man than himself, though all in rags, kissed his forehead with great respect. This was returned by Hagi Ismael, first kissing his forehead and then his hand; after which the Moullah did the same, as I thought with rather less ceremony. Ismael gave a very slight salutation of Salama to the Shekh, and we all sat down.

"Brother," says the sherriffe to Ismael, "you seem a stranger in this country?" "I am a Turk," answered Ismael, "born in Anatolia, a janizary of Ali Bey at Cairo." "He came," says Shekh Fidele, "to Habbesh, with their Kafr, the Abuna, or great priest, and is returning to Cairo with that white man, who is physician to Ali Bey." "Kafr there, or Kafr here," continued Ismael, who did but half understand what was said, "the greatest of all Kafrs (that is Infidel) is, I believe, in Teawa. I do not think there is one Mussulman in this cursed place." "Is this the Frank," says the Moullah, "whose servant brought letters to the Shekh of Beyla some weeks ago, and was forwarded to Sennaar?" "No," says Fidele, "he does not know the Shekh of Beyla." "I am sure," says the Moullah," "that, such a day, when I was at Sennaar,

there was a talk of a man of this kind, whose servant was at Aira with Shekh Adelan, and had orders to come hither with a servant of his, and one from the king; and I am sure, upon reflection," continued the Moullah, "this must be the man." "Shekh," says he, turning to me (who sat silent, overjoyed at the train I saw the affair taking), did you come from Habesh? have you letters for Sennaar?" "I came from Habesh," replied I, "with letters to the king of Sennaar; likewise letters to him from the sherriffe of Mecca, and from Ali Bey of Cairo (you are welcome to see them all), yet contrary to faith, observed even in Pagan nations, I am here detained by Shekh Fidele, who last night attempted to murder me in his own house, because I would not pay him 2000 piastres." Shekh Fidele's face turned pale; he could scarcely utter, "That is not true." "As that book is the word of God," says Ismael (pointing to the Koran, lying in the Sherriffe's lap) "It is every word true. Look upon my turban," says he to Fidele, do you call me a liar?" *Fid.* "I did not call you a liar, only that Christian lied." *Ism.* "I say, that every word he spoke is truth, or I am no true believer. Was not your sword drawn, and your scabbard lying on the floor, when I entered the room? Was there any one present but him and you? Whom did you draw your sword upon?" "Pure merriment, for a little amusement," says Fidele, turning to the Moullah; "I was diverting myself with the Christian, who came to give me medicines." "The diversion, I fancy, was over on your part," says Soliman, my servant, "when you threw away your sword, after drawing it, and called upon all your servants for assistance. Were not your women at the door upon my entering it?" *Fid.* "Would you have had me shot in my own house by an infidel? Did he not present a pistol at me?" *Ism.*

"Lord! Lord! he was only diverting himself, too? Did you not see that? You should have gone on with your merriment: What stopt you?" "Look you, Shekh," said I, "your inward thoughts are seen by me. Did not you send two messengers to Shekh Ibrahim in Atbara that very night, within these twelve hours, desiring him to take me by force, while asleep, to heal his wounded men? Was this amusement, too? Beware in time; for every thought in your heart is known to me as soon as it is formed."

The sherriffe muttered to himself, "Hakim y'Eref—he is a learned man; he knows these things." "Shekh Ibrahim is returned to Sennaar," says the Moullah, "that is the reason why he should make haste, and all this that has passed is very improper. If a man diverts himself with drawn swords, is he not likely, when angry, to kill? this ought not to be; send the man away; you can get camels from the Jehaina.—Men, like him, have no money. There are many of them, at all times and places, wandering over the face of the earth, and will be so till Hagiuge Magiuge * come; they are Dervishes, study the herbs and the water, and cure diseases." "God bless the truth!" said I; "there it is. I am a Dervish, a poor, but an innocent man." The Moullah seemed to take credit to himself for all this learning. "I saw," says the sherriffe, "a number of his countrymen in large ships from the Indies, when I was at Jidda; they are called Inglese." "They are brave men," says Ismael, "and came first from Turkey. Their country is called Caz Dangli to this day. I have seen it, and am sure no man would hurt Yagoube that knew him."

* By this they mean Gog and Magog. We shall after see their belief concerning them.

Fid. "So Yagoube is his name; the first time I knew it." *Moul.* "Yagoube el Hakim; now, I remember it perfectly. Ali Tchelebi, Mahomet Abou Calec's factor, is ill of an enchantment from an enemy; his bowels are out of order; he it was that asked me if such a man was yet come to Beyla. They surely expect that you should forward him to Sennaar. True, Yagoube el Hakim, that was his name." *Fid.* "He shall go next week, since it is so, if I can but get camels." Upon this we rose, seeing other people coming in. When I took hold of the Shekh's hand at going away, he asked me, in apparent good humour, "Well, Yagoube, are we friends now?" I answered him, in the most complacent tone of voice possible, "Sir, I never was your enemy; so far otherwise, that my only anxiety now is, lest your behaviour may bring upon you powerful adversaries, before whom you are not able to stand. The ill-usage I have met with will not be easily passed over either in Abyssinia, or at Sennaar. I am neither servant nor merchant; and it has been your ill-luck to try your wicked experiments upon a man like me, who never in his life carried much money about him, because he never valued it." *Moul.* "You must forget all, and I will be your friend with the Shekh, since you come from the sherriffe of Mecca." "And I, too," says the other, "for the kindness you have shewed our brother Ismael there, in carrying him home from among the Kafrs of Habesh; and if Fidele cannot procure camels, we will try and help him; so, go in peace, and get ready."

We had scarce got rid of this real danger, when the apprehension of an imaginary one struck us violently. The water at Teawa is stagnant in pools, and exceedingly bad. Either that, or the bouza, a kind of new beer which they sent us with our meat, had given all

of us, at the same time, a violent diarrhœa, and I was tormented with a perpetual thirst ever since we had been overtaken by the simoom; and the bouza being acid, was not only more agreeable, but, I thought, relieved me more than bad water; in this, therefore, I certainly had exceeded. When we found we were all taken ill at the same time, it came into our wise heads that Shekh Fidele had given us poison in our dinner, and we were very much perplexed what we should do the next day. None of us, therefore, tasted the meat sent us; when, at night, our friend, the black slave, came, and to her we frankly told our doubts. The poor creature fell into such violent fits of laughing, which followed so close the one upon the other, and lasted so long, that I feared she would have expired upon the spot. "It is the water," says she; "it does so to all strangers;" and then she fell into another great fit of laughter. "Child," answered I, "you know the Shekh is not our friend, and there is no easier way to get rid of us than by poison, as we eat every thing that comes from you without fear."— "And so you may," says she; "the Shekh could do no such thing without our knowledge, and we would rather all be burnt alive than be guilty of so vile an action. Besides," says she, "this is not like Habesh, where both meat and drink, brought to you, are tasted by the bearer before you use them. There is no such thing as poison in Atbara; the lance and the knife in the field, that is the manner in which they kill one another here."

We then shewed her our dinner uneaten, and she again fell into a violent fit of laughter, and took the meat away that she might warm it, and we heard her laughing all the way as she went by herself. She was not long in returning with provisions in plenty, and told us, that her mistresses never were so diverted in

their lives, and that she left them still laughing. The black slave then called me to the door, and gave me an Indian green handkerchief, which she said Aiscach had pulled from her head, and sent with her to me, with orders to inquire, "Do the women of your country do such things, Yagoube, which, for all the fathers and gold in the world, Aiscach would not be guilty of? My father is, indeed, a Funge*, but my mother is a Jehaina†."

Neither the Shekh nor Moullah expected me out on Sunday, which, I told them, was my festival. I employed that day in mounting and rectifying my quadrant, and that same evening had a clear and distinct observation of Procyon, and several other of the fixed stars, the largest and fittest for my purpose. The next day also, having a good observation of the sun in the meridian, all equations adopted from a mean, I found the latitude of Teawa, the capital of Atbara, to be 14° 2′ 4″ north. With regard to longitude, Hor-Cacamoot is about six miles east of Teawa, which is nearly under the same meridian with Ras el Feel, so there was no occasion for any observation on that subject.

On the 13th of April arrived a naked Arab of the Jehaina, with intelligence that a caravan belonging to Atbara, which had come to Nara in Abyssinia for salt, had been all seized by Ammonios, Ayto Confu's governor of Nara, their asses and salt taken from them, and the men put in close prison. The Shekh of the Jehaina, an old man of very comely presence, with ten or twelve of his clan on camels, came over to Shekh Fidele that morning before I went out, and

* Which means a slave.
† A noble and free Arab.

they found the Moullah sitting with him. The news struck all of them with a panic, but none more so than our Shekh of Atbara. The Shekh of the Jehaina said he had not heard the cause of it, but so violent a procedure had not happened even when Yasoûs II. invaded Sennaar, for the people of the two frontiers had all that time been friends. He begged, however, Shekh Fidele immediately to interfere, and send some person to Ras el Feel, to his friend Yasine. When they had settled thus far, a message came for me to attend the Shekh. I immediately went, leaving my servants to put up my quadrant. I had, indeed, an inclination to observe the approaching eclipse; but as I knew perfectly the situation of Teawa with regard to Ras el Feel, I thought I might spare myself this unnecessary trouble, and only make use of the eclipse to frighten Fidele as part of the punishment he so amply deserved.

There was a prodigious number of people assembled at the Shekh's door. The Jehaina had all come upon camels; two or three of the principal ones were sitting with him and the Moullah, one of these, whom I did not know, but who had seen me at Ras el Feel, upon my approaching the Shekh, got up, took me by the hand, and made a very respectful salutation. As he was a friend of Yasine, and Shekh el Nile, I never doubted from that minute that this was a contrivance of theirs in my favour.

The Moullah had alleged, that probably I had dispatched some intelligence to Yasine of my being detained, which had caused him to make this reprisal; but Shekh Fidele assured them that he knew it to be impossible, and that this seizure of the caravan must have been occasioned by some ill usage to the people belonging to Tchelga and Nara, the frontier villages to the westward. In this the Shekh of Jehaina agreed;

for he had heard Ammonios mentioned, but nothing of Yasine. The Moullah was unconvinced, but asked me, "Hakim, have you never sent a complaint to Yasine since you came to Teawa? tell me truly; no harm shall befal you from it." "If I were not to tell you truly," said I, "Shekh, I would not answer you at all. I am under no obligation to do it, nor am I under any fear. You are but at the beginning of this affair, and many will suffer before I do." "Truly," says the Moullah, "but have you sent intelligence to Ras el Feel?" "No, no," says Fidele, "he had it not in his power; nor is there a man in Teawa that durst go on such an errand; it is some disturbance about Tchelga."

I easily perceived that the Moullah wanted me to confess, which I likewise saw the use of myself. "I sent," said I, "messengers from Teawa two several times. The first, when Fidele pretended Yasine was to murder me in the desert; the second, when he said he had no camels; and I also mentioned the piastres, and his intention to murder me." "Ammonios" says black Soliman, "and Yasine, Nara, and Ras el Feel, all belong to Ayto Confu, and were given to Yagoube by him, for his maintenance all the time he was at Gondar. Ayto Confu and he are brothers; they were together in the camp, slept together in the same house; they are brothers, and more than brothers, for they swore to each other, when we passed Tcherkin, upon the heart of the elephant *. I swear by our holy faith, that Confu will be down here himself; what does he care for a journey of two days?"

All now with one voice condemned Fidele, who had

* This is a very horrid oath, full of nonsense, and vows of friendship and secrecy.

not a word to say, only, that if he knew the person who carried that message, he would cut off his head, if he was his brother. "But it is impossible," says the Shekh; "should I not have known of the messenger being absent? impossible!" Then turning to his servant, said, "Is Kutcho el Hybari here? I have not seen him lately."—"Sir," says he, "You know you sent Kutcho to Mendera long before the Hakim arrived."—"True," says Fidele; "then it is impossible." "Your messengers and mine," said I, "Shekh, are not of the same sort, nor shall I ask your leave when I am to send to Ras el Feel or Sennaar, nor shall you ever cut off the head from any one of them. But why are you alarmed at these asses being taken? Should you not be afraid of something similar happening at Mecca? Am not I under the protection of the sherriffe? When Metical Aga hears this, will he not resent it? Will Yousef Kabil, the Christian, the sherriffe's vizir at Jidda, through whose hands your people pass, will he be gentler to them upon this account?"—"A curse upon him," says the sherriffe; "he gentle! he is a shark."—"Meloun Ibn Sheitan," says the Turk Ismael, *i. e.* accursed wretch, child of the devil!" "Well then," said I, "the difficulty is only to know if he is informed of this at Mecca. Friday, the 17th, is your festival. If the afternoon of that shall pass like those of common days, I am a worthless man and an impostor; but if on that day, after el'asser*, a sign be seen in the heavens that shall be thought by all of you unusual and extraordinary, then am I an innocent man, and Fidele's designs against me are known to the world, at Sennaar, at Mecca, at Cairo, and at Gondar, and everywhere else, and will not be pleasing either to God or man." "Yarif el Hakim†," says the sherriffe; "Hakim‡!" says the Shekh of the

* El'asser is four o'clock. † The Hakim, or wise man, knows. ‡ He is indeed wise.

Jehaina; "Ullah Akbar*!" says the Moullah, lifting his eyes up to heaven, and counting his beads very devoutly.

The foretelling the sign seemed not at all to please the Shekh, who appeared very much disconcerted with the supposed invisibility of my messengers. I got up, having pushed my design just far enough. I then shook hands with the Shekh, saying, "I am glad to see you don't want camels," alluding to the number I saw come with the Jehaina; "get your bouza made, and your provisions ready, you'll have strangers with you soon." He said only, "Ullah Kerim!" *i. e.* God is merciful; which was echoed by every mouth in the room. I saluted particularly the Shekh of the Jehaina, who had seen me at Ras el-Feel, and I then went out of the room, leaving them all there; and going home very cheerful, began to prepare for leaving Teawa, which we were satisfied was now near at hand.

On the 14th, in the morning, the Moullah and Sherriffe, with the Shekh of Beyla's servant, and the old Kaiya Soliman, came to see our clocks and watches. They sat upon benches at the door, and drank coffee, not caring to enter the house, I suppose, for fear of being defiled. As the old Kaiya was there, it was almost impossible to speak concerning our affairs; all was about our religion, and the manner in which a Dervish lived. All at once, a servant behind cried out, "News from Sennaar!" and, presently after, we saw three men; one of whom was my servant, whom I sent to Sennaar with the Daveina, who delivered to me a letter from Hagi Belal, informing me, that Mahomet Abou Calec, and Shekh Adelan, were both at a distance from Sennaar, at the head of armies, and the king in the capital almost alone, under great apprehensions; but as no mischief had yet happened,

* God is great.

and the king had no force, it was hoped things might be made up. He added, that he thought it better to wait a little, to get a servant of Adelan to accompany the king's, than to trust to that one alone. Having communicated the contents of my letter to Shekh Fidele, and received his congratulations, they all left me, and went to the Shekh to hear what further news were brought to him. What I told him was confirmed; and the Shekh, having no longer any option, declared his resolution to obey without further delay, and desired us to get ready for our journey.

It was told us, however, soon after, that the king's servant who had arrived, whose name was Mahomet, was a great friend of Shekh Fidele, and the usual one sent to him at Teawa; and that he was a great drunkard and reprobate. On the contrary, Adelan's servant, though young, was a very gentle, sober person, a slave that had been given to Adelan by the Shekh of Beyla; and he was very urgent for us to depart. We soon saw the consequence of this difference of manners; and that Shekh Fidele had not relinquished his view to the piastres. For having tutored the king's servant all night, and gained him to his interest, he had, early in the morning of the 15th, declared that he was not to stir from Teawa for a fortnight, and he was ordered to get the camels from some distance in Atbara, the place I do not remember. This displeased Adelan's servant much, who declared before the assembly, that he was determined to set out the next day; that he knew not the orders the king had given, but he knew his master's orders; and that, if the Shekh did not furnish him with camels, or opposed our setting out, he would take him with him to Adelan at Aira, or, upon his refusal to go, denounce him a rebel, and his master's enemy, and leave him to what would be the consequence. Upon this bold speech, every body left the Shekh, and went away, whispering,

two and two together. The king's servant joined his companion, who told me to be ready, and fear nothing, for he would see me to-morrow night at Beyla.

About half an hour after my return home I was again called to the Shekh, who had only the Moullah and the old Kaiya sitting by him, with two short letters in his hand from Yasine, full of reproaches for his behaviour to me; and declaring, with most solemn oaths, that if those letters found me at Teawa, or if I was not gone from thence in peace, he would, before a fortnight was elapsed, be down as an enemy upon Teawa; and unless the Daveina did engage to burn every stalk of corn between that and Beyla as soon as it was in the ear, he would shut Abyssinia against them, and that they should neither eat bread nor drink water in it, as long as he was alive, and governor of Ras el Feel. These letters mentioned a complaint likewise that had been sent to Shekh Adelan at Sennaar, but by whom they did not say, probably from Ayto Confu, complaining of Fidele's usage to me. Yasine's men, that brought the letters from Ras el Feel to Teawa, were said to be three in number, mounted on camels, or dromedaries, and armed with coats of mail and head-pieces. They refused to come into Teawa, to eat of Shekh Fidele's bread*, or drink of his water, looking upon him as a declared enemy of Yasine, their master. Fidele, with some difficulty, at last allowed black Soliman to go to meet them, to persuade them to enter the town; but all to no purpose, for the only favour he could obtain was, that they should stay with the Jehaina at Jibbel Isriff till they heard I was fairly set out on my journey.

The next day, the 16th of April, I received a message from the Moullah, that the camels were all ready, that girbas for the water were wanting, but

* This refusal, among the Arabs, is a declaration of the most deadly enmity.

girbas should be found for me; and he would give me his word they should be found filled at the river where I directed; as also all sorts of provisions and necessaries to carry me to Beyla, to which place I should set out the moment I pleased; only that I must not go from Teawa without making peace with the Shekh, and promising to forgive him, and not make any complaint against him at Sennaar or elsewhere, provided he, on his part, gave over all further machinations against me. I answered, "That however ill-used, yet, for his sake, I would do any thing he wished me to do, and that I was ready to pacify Yasine, by writing to him by the return of his messengers." All was agreed; so we packed up our baggage with the utmost diligence.

On the 17th, in the forenoon, I was appointed to meet the Shekh at his own house, and told the Moullah I expected he would have the camels ready. As we suspected, our girbas were insufficient, and indeed we had found them so when they lost our water in the wood near Imgellalib; we got three new ones from the Shekh in perfect good condition, and gave him our two in exchange, which were something larger than his. Each of these skins is valued at twelve dollars, or about three pounds Sterling. There is great art and labour required in making the seams water-tight; they are all stitched most dexterously, strongly greased, and then laid over thick on the outside with warm tar, and need constant care and inspection. About nine o'clock we went to the Shekh, and entered presently upon business. I engaged to pacify Yasine, whose servants, upon my message, came to town to see me depart, and were kindly received and clothed by the Shekh. A large breakfast was ordered; Fidele and I, with Yasine's servants, ate together of several very good dishes. The two holy men, and another stranger

equally holy, ate together out of a separate plate; after which we all stood up, and said the prayer of peace, and I took my leave. We all then went out together into the market-place, and eight camels were ordered down to my house, with people to wait upon them.

The girbas, which lay filled and soaking at the river-side, were ready to be loaded upon our camels. A servant of the Kaiya held my horse, which had been taken from me by Fidele, soon after my arriving at Teawa, but which was now restored me. My servant, who came from Sennaar, had indeed told me that no horses would live there; that those that were necessary for the troops of the government were all kept at a distance from Sennaar, and maintained at Aira, or places in the sand at a small distance, but free from the plague of the fly. The Shekh made no observation upon this. I said, "The horse is a very excellent one, and I will now shew him to you." I sent for a short double-barrelled gun, threw off my burnoose, and mounting the horse, made him do every thing he was capable of, putting him to his full speed, firing to right and left on each side of him.

They were all struck with amazement, and with a kind of terror. They had never before seen a gun fired on horseback, much less a gun fired twice without charging. I did not want to explain the matter to them; and, as far as I could perceive, the Moullah especially was very glad when I sent it home. "This is the way," said I, "that my countrymen ride, and the way they fight. No people on earth understand fire-arms or horsemanship like them. For my part, I am a man of peace, a Dervish, and no soldier; it is not my profession, and I do the thing awkwardly. If you saw some of our soldiers ride, it would be a sight indeed." Fidele laughed, or counterfeited a laugh; but being a soldier, it was his part to say

something. "If many of your countrymen like you were here, man of peace as you are, unless they were friends to us, they would get all Atbara to themselves. If they were friends," says he, "I think I could do something with them; that horse seems to have the sense of a man." "Such as he is," said I, dismounting, "a prince gave him to me, and such as he is, I now give him to you, as a proof that I am your friend, and that I should not grudge you a few paltry piastres, if I had not been under a vow of poverty; money is of no kind of value to me, and consequently not carried about with me." The horse was gladly received, though, as I was going to Sennaar, where no horses are kept, the compliment was a cheap one on my part.

"How could you, Fidele," says the Moullah in great surprise, "have it in your heart to torment such a man as this? I told you what he was, our books speak of them: they are not Kafrs, but spend all their lives in wandering over the face of the earth in search of wisdom, and are always to do so till Hagiuge Magiuge come, and then there will be an end of the world." I made a bow of assent to the Moullah, and all the rest turned up their eyes to heaven in wonder of so much learning, repeating their usual ejaculation, "Ullah Akbar!" God is great. I now took my leave of them, and was going home, when the younger Sherriffe called after me, and said, "I suppose, now you are all at peace, we shall not see the sign that you foretold us was to appear in the heavens to-day." "I should be thought a liar if it did not appear," said I; "do you wish to see it?" "I wish to see it," says he, "if it will do no harm." "Then," replied I, "you shall see it; and it shall do no harm now. I hope it will bring health and happiness, and a good crop to Teawa, and all the kingdom of Sennaar. Go home, while I order my affairs. Something more than two hours after this I will come to you, and it will then

appear." They all went away, and, as I thought by their looks, they would have been better satisfied that affair had been forgot, the Shekh saying peevishly to the Sherriffe, "Let him mind his affairs and his journey; what is the use of these things now?"

I had rectified my watch by observation. I knew I could not be far wrong, having seen in the ephemerides the hour the eclipse was to begin. I passed a corner of the Shekh's house, and went in at the back-door. He was there with his usual friends, the Moullah, the Sherriffe, the Kaiya, and one or two more. The Sherriffe asked me where the sign would appear; and the Moullah, if there would be any thunder and lightning? I told them there would be nothing disagreeable at all. I went to the door, and saw it was begun. There was to be a total eclipse of the moon. I did not tell them at first, till the moon having arisen, the shade appeared some way advanced upon the disk. "Now! look at that," said I; "in some time after this the moon shall be so totally swallowed up in darkness, that a small light shall only be seen in the edges." The were frightened at the denunciation, rather than at any thing they observed, till a little before the eclipse became total. A violent apprehension then fell upon them all; and the women from their apartments began to howl, as they do on all melancholy occasions of misfortune, or death. They were in the inner square. "Now," continued I, "I have kept my word; it will soon be clear again, and will do no harm to man or beast."

It was agreed among them that I should not go home till it was totally at an end. I consented to this; and only said to the Shekh, that I wished he would let me see my patients before I went away, for that one of them was really ill, and needed advice. He seemed to take it very kindly, and desired me to go in. I was met in the antichamber by Aiscach, and

two or three black slaves, who cried out in great terror, "O Hakim! what is this? what are you going to do?" "I am going to do, Madam," said I, "one of the most disagreeable things I ever did in my life; I am going to take leave of you." I was immediately surrounded with a number of women, some of them crying, some of them with children in their arms. I went into the room where the two ladies were, whom I quieted and satisfied to the utmost of my power. We parted with reciprocal professions of friendship and regret at separation. I then begged that I might see their slave, who used to bring us meat, with a clean cloth, to wrap up something I had for them. They told me, Sennaar was but a bad place for white people; but promised to send recommendations in my favour, both to Adelan and the king's women, by Adelan's servant, who was to conduct us.

When I returned to the Shekh, the emersion was far advanced, and they all seemed to be regaining their composure, though strong marks of surprise remained in their countenances. After a little conversation, turning chiefly upon Hagiuge Magiuge, and their silly stories about them, which I shall not repeat, I took my leave, and went home, renewing my assurances that all was forgotten.

At night, the slave came and brought a clean cotton cloth. I sent a piece of thin India yellow sattin, and six handsome crimson and green handkerchiefs, to the beautiful Aiscach; and, to the best of my power, discharged all our obligations to those that were our friends, and had been kind to us.

In a country so desert, and exceedingly poor as Teawa, under such a government, it is not to be expected that trade of any kind should flourish; yet there is a miserable manufacture of coarse cotton cloths of the size of large towels, just enough to go round the middle, which pass current, like specie, all over At-

bara: They are called Dinoor, and are used in place of small silver money. The Mahalac, a very bad copper coin, passes for smaller matters; so that the currency of Teawa stands thus:—

20 Mahalac, 1 Crush,
12 Crush, 1 Metical,
4 Metical, 1 Vakia.

The vakia of gold is worth about forty-five shillings; but the only commerce of Teawa is carried on by exchange, as salt for grain, camels for salt; the value of goods varying according to the scarcity or plenty of one sort of commodity with respect to the other.

The reader will, I believe, by this, be as desirous to get out of Teawa as I was: and if so, it is charity in time to deliver him. I took leave of the Shekh on the 18th in the morning; but before we could get all ready to depart, it was five in the afternoon. The day had been immoderately hot, and we had resolved to travel all night, though we did not say so to the Shekh, who advised us to sleep at Imgededema, where there was fresh water. But we had taken a girba of water with us, or rather, in case of accident, a little in each of the three girbas; and all being ready on the river-side, except the king's servant, we set out, and he overtook us in less than two hours afterwards, pretty well refreshed with the Shekh's bouza, and strongly prejudiced against us, as we had occasion to discover afterwards *.

* The account which Mr Bruce gives of the eclipse of the moon at Teawa, Friday, 17th April, 1772, has been questioned by several writers, on account of the apparent deviation which it seems to make from what must have happened there. This circumstance is occasioned by the loose and inaccurate language in which the incident is stated, and the manner in which it is printed in the first edition. Instead of being printed "*before* classer," as it is in Vol. iv. p. 397 of that edition, it ought to have been "*after* classer," and is so corrected by the author. A mark is made by Mr Bruce in De la Caille's Ephemerides, p. 190, opposite the number of the day in which the eclipse took place, with ink of the same colour with that with which his journals were then written;

a proof that he attended to this phenomenon, at that time. As for the word *elasser*, it must not be understood to signify four o'clock, in the European sense of the word. The Arabs divide the day into several irregular portions, of which elasser is one, but these are determined by the general appearance of the sun in the sky, not by any instrument for measuring time. The eclipse began, it would seem, a few minutes after four; but this is not elasser, which comprehends the whole evening of the day from a vague indeterminate time. In the hurry of composition Mr Bruce has used some expressions, which seem to affirm that he saw the beginning of the eclipse. But these arose from his writing from memory, and confounding the eagerness with which he watched for the moon's rising *in the eclipsed state*, about six o'clock, with the recollection subsisting in his mind of the exact time when it had *really* begun, while the moon was under the horizon, the progress of which he had learned from the ephemerides, and for which he had rectified his watch by observations, some time before. Several slight inadvertencies, arising from the same cause, appear from the journals to have been made by the author in the course of this work; and considering its extent, with the length of time between the transactions having taken place, and the composition of the narrative, more of them might reasonably have been expected. Those, which the editor has discovered, are pointed out in this edition. The changes, which appear on the author's account of that phenomenon, are all made by himself, on the copy which he revised for the press. According to an anonymous calculator, whose criticism appeared in an Edinburgh newspaper, June 12, 1790, the sun set at Teawa, in N. L. 14 deg. 2 m. E. L. 34 deg. 39m. on Friday, 17 April, 1772, at 11 min. past six in the evening; and the moon, being then diametrically opposite to the sun, must have risen (a few minutes being allowed for retraction and parallax) immediately after. The beginning of the eclipse he states to have been at 4 h. 3½ m. (mean time); the beginning of total darkness, 5 h. 33½ m.; the middle 6 h. 22 m.; the end of total darkness, 7 h. 10½ m.; and the end of the eclipse, 8 h. 17½ m. The moon, according to this calculation, must have risen totally eclipsed, about a quarter after six, in a state much better prepared to frighten the ignorant Arabs, than if it had been gradually darkened. It must have been seen at Teawa for more than an hour *totally* eclipsed, not to mention its emersion, which occupied a larger portion of time. Mr Bruce was fully able to make the best of this miraculous interval; and that he did so, appears to be indisputable. At the distance of 14 years, a trust in his memory, which was uncommonly good, seems to have misled him by confounding together relative circumstances. Mistakes of this kind are very common in ordinary cases, and even in evidence given on matters of life and death, without any improper intention in the person who commits them.—E.

CHAP. VII.

Arrival at Beyla—Friendly Reception there, and after, amongst the Nuba—Arrival at Sennaar.

When we got a few miles into the plain, my servant delivered me a message from the Moullah, that he would join us the next day at Beyla; that we were not to trust to the king's servant in any thing, but entirely to that of the Shekh Adelan; and if these two had any dispute together, to take no share in it, but leave them to settle it between themselves; that, upon no account whatever, we should suffer any companions to join us upon the road to Beyla, but drive them off by harsh words, beat them, if they did not go away, and, if they still persisted, to shoot them, and make our way good by force; that between Teawa and Beyla was a place, the inhabitants of which had withdrawn themselves from their allegiance to the king of Sennaar, who could not there protect us; therefore we were to trust to ourselves, and admit of no parley; for if we passed, we should pass with applause, as if the king's force had conducted us; and if we miscarried, the blame would be laid upon ourselves, as having ventured, so thinly attended, through a country laid waste by rebel Arabs, expressly in defiance of government. He added, that he did not believe it was

in Shekh Fidele's power, from want of time, to do us any injury upon the road; that the people in Teawa were in general well-affected to us, and afraid we should bring Yasine and the Daveina upon them, and so were the Jehaina; and as for the pack of graceless soldiers that were then about the Shekh, their belief that we had really no money with us, and the last exhibition I had shewn them on horseback, had perfectly cured them of venturing their lives for little, against people so much superior to them in the management of arms; yet he wished us to be active and vigilant like men, and trust in nothing till we had seen the Shekh of Beyla, and not to lose a moment on the road.

Our journey, for the first seven hours, was through a barren, bare, and sandy plain, without finding a vestige of any living creature, without water, and without grass, a country that seemed under the immediate curse of Heaven. At twelve o'clock at night, we turned a little to the eastward of south, to enter through very broken ground into a narrow defile, between two hills of no considerable height. This pass is called Mattina. One of our camel-drivers declared, that he saw two men run into the bushes before him, upon which our people took all to their slings, throwing many stones before them into the bushes, directed nearly to a man's height. At their earnest desire, I ordered Ismael to fire our large ship-blunderbuss, with fifty small bullets in it, among the bushes, in the direction of the road side; but we neither saw nor heard any thing of those people thereafter, if there really were any; nor did I, at the time, indeed, believe the camel-driver had seen any one, but through the medium of his own fears; for the Arabs never attack you till near sun-set, if they are doubtful of their own superiority, or at dawn of day, if they think they have

the advantage, that they may have time to pursue you.

We, however, all continued on foot, from four till the grey of the morning of the 19th of April. Indeed, so violent an inclination to sleep had fallen upon me, that I was forced to walk, for fear of breaking my neck by a fall from my camel, till eight o'clock, when we halted in a wood of ebony bushes, growing like the birch tree in many shoots from the old stems, which had been cut down for fear of harbouring the fly, and totally deprived of their leaves afterwards, by the burning of grass, from the same reason. This place is called Abou Jehaarat, and is the limit between the government of Teawa and Beyla. After such a very fatiguing journey, we rested at Abou Jehaarat till the afternoon. The sun was very hot, but fortunately some shepherds caves were dug in the bank, and to these we fled for shelter from the intense heat of the sun, where the ebony trees, though in a very thick wood, could afford us no shade, for the reasons already given.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, we set out from Abou Jehaarat, in a direction west, and at eight in the evening we arrived at Beyla. There is no water between Teawa and Beyla. Once, Imgededema, and a number of villages, were supplied with water from wells, and had large crops of Indian corn sown about their possessions. The curse of that country, the Arabs Daveina, have destroyed Imgededema, and all the villages about it, filled up their wells, burnt their crops, and exposed all the inhabitants to die by famine.

We found Beyla to be in lat. 13° 42′ 4″; that is, about eleven miles west of Teawa, and thirty one and a half miles due south. We were met by Mahomet, the Shekh, at the very entrance of the town. He

said he looked upon us as risen from the dead; that we must be good people, and particularly under the care of Providence, to have escaped the many snares the Shekh of Atbara had laid for us. Mahomet, the Shekh, had provided every sort of refreshment possible for us; and, thinking we could not live without it, he had ordered sugar for us from Sennaar. Honey for the most part hitherto had been its substitute. We had a good comfortable supper: as fine wheat-bread as ever I eat in my life, brought from Sennaar, as also rice; in a word, every thing that our kind landlord could contribute to our plentiful and hospitable entertainment.

Our whole company was full of joy, to which the Shekh greatly encouraged them; and if there was an alloy to the happiness, it was the seeing that I did not partake of it. Symptoms of an aguish disorder had been hanging about me for several days, ever since the diarrhœa had left me. I found the greatest repugnance, or nausea, at the smell of warm meat; and, having a violent head-ache, I insisted upon going to bed supperless, after having drank a quantity of warm water by way of emetic. Being exceedingly tired, I soon fell sound asleep, having first taken some drops of a strong spirituous tincture of the bark which I had prepared at Gondar, resolving, if I found any remission, as I then did, to take several good doses of the bark in powder on the morrow, beginning at day-break, which I accordingly did with its usual success.

On the 20th of April, a little after the dawn of day, the Shekh, in great anxiety, came to the place where I was lying, upon a tanned buffalo's hide, on the ground. His sorrow was soon turned into joy, when he found me quite recovered from my illness. I had taken the bark, and expressed a desire of eating a hearty breakfast of rice, which was immediately prepared for me.

The Shekh of Beyla was an implicit believer in medicine. Seeing me take some drops of the tincture before coffee, he insisted upon pledging me, and I believe would have willingly emptied the whole bottle. After having suffered great agony with his own complaint, he had passed some small stones, and was greatly better, as he said, for the soap-pills. I put him in a way to prepare these, as also his lime-water. It was impossible to have done any favour for him equal to this, as his agony had been so great. He told me our Moullah was arrived from Teawa, and had left Shekh Fidele still repining at our departure, without leaving him the piastres. As for the eclipse, he said, he did not care a straw, nor for what they did or knew at Mecca, for he had no interest there. I understood our friend Mahomet, Shekh of Beyla, had been under great uneasiness at the eclipse, when it advanced in the immersion, and became total. Some time before this, as he said, there had been another, but not so great, on the day the Daveina burnt Imgededema, with above thirty other villages, and dispersed or destroyed about two thousand inhabitants of Atbara.

It was now the time to give the Shekh a present, and I had prepared one for him, such as he very well deserved; but no intreaty, nor any means I could use, could prevail upon him to accept of the merest trifle. On the contrary, he solemnly swore, that if I importuned him further, he would get upon his horse and go into the country. All that he desired, and that too as a favour, was, that when I had rested at Sennaar, he might come and consult me further as to his complaints, for which he promised he should bring a recompence with him. We then settled to give his present to the Moullah, with which he was very well pleased, and which he took without any of those diffi-

culties the Shekh of Beyla had started when it was offered to him.

All being friends now, and contented, the day was given to repose and joy. The king's servant came and told me, by way of secret, that we could not do less to please the Shekh than stay with him a week at Beyla, and I believe it would not have displeased him; but after so much coming and going, so much occasion for talk relative to me, I was resolved to follow Hagi Bolal's advice, and press on to Sennaar before affairs there were in a desperate situation, or some scheme of mischief should be contrived by Fidele. One thing Shekh Adelan's servant told us, that he had, by his master's orders, taken from Fidele the present I had given him, though he had already made it up into a gown, or robe, for himself. "He is a poor wretch," says the Shekh of Beyla; "he has spent two years of the king's revenues from Atbara, and nobody has supported him except Shekh Adelan, whose daughter he married, but he now has given him up since he has fully known him; and if our troubles do not follow quickly, I suppose one of these days I shall have him here in his way to Sennaar, never to return; for everybody knows now that it was in hatred to him, and for the many faithless and bad actions he was guilty of, that the Arabs have destroyed all that part of the country, though they have not burnt a straw about Beyla."

We had again a large and plentiful dinner, and a quantity of bouza; venison of several different species of the antelope or deer kind, and Guinea-fowls, boiled with rice, the best part of our fare, for the venison smelled and tasted strongly of musk. This was the provision made by the Shekh's two sons, boys about fourteen or fifteen years old, who had each of them got a gun with a match-lock, and whose favour I secured to

a very high degree, by giving them some good gunpowder, and plenty of small leaden bullets.

In the afternoon we walked out to see the village, which is a very pleasant one, situated upon the bottom of a hill, covered with wood, all the rest flat before it. Through this plain there are many large timber trees, planted in rows, and joined with high hedges, as in Europe, forming inclosures for keeping cattle; but of these we saw none, as they had been moved to the Dender for fear of the flies. There is no water at Beyla but what is got from deep wells. Large plantations of Indian corn are everywhere about the town. The inhabitants are in continual apprehension from the Arabs Daveina at Sim-Sim, about forty miles south-east from them; and from another powerful race called Wed abd el Gin*, i. e. *Son of the slaves of the Devil*, who live to the south-west of them, between the Dender and the Nile. Beyla is another frontier town of Sennaar, on the side of Sim-Sim; and between Teawa and this, on the Sennaar side, and Ras el Feel, Nara, and Tchelga, upon the Abyssinian side, all is desert and waste, the Arabs only suffering the water to remain there without villages near it, that they and their flocks may come at certain seasons while the grass grows, and the pools or springs fill elsewhere.

Although I went early to bed with full determination to set out by day-break, yet I found it was impossible to put my design in execution, or get from the hands of our kind landlord. One of our girbas seemed to fail, and needed to be repaired. Nothing good, as he truly said, could come from the Shekh of Atbara. A violent dispute had arisen in the evening, after I was gone to bed, over their bouza, between

* Gin, in ancient times, had a better signification, equal to Genius among the Romans.—E.

the king's servant and that of Shekh Adelan. It was about dividing their fees which they had received from Shekh Fidelé. This was carried a great length, and it was at last agreed that it should be determined by the Shekh of Beyla in the morning, when both of them, as might be supposed, should have cooler heads. For my part, I took no thought or concern about it, as no circumstance of its origin had been notified to me; but it took up so much of our time that it was after dinner before we were ready.

On the 21st of April we left Beyla at three o'clock in the afternoon, our direction south-west, through a very pleasant, flat, country, but without water; there had been none in our way nearer than the river Rahad. About eleven at night we alighted in a wood: The place is called Baherie, as near as we could compute nine miles from Beyla.

On the 22d, at half past five o'clock in the morning, we left Baherie, still continuing westward, and at nine we came to the banks of the Rahad. The ford is called Tchir Chaira. The river itself was now standing in pools, the water foul, stinking, and covered with a green mantle; the bottom soft and muddy, but there was no choice. The water at Beyla was so bad, that we took only as much as was absolutely necessary till we arrived at running water from the Rahad. We continued half an hour travelling along the river at N. W. and W. N. W. till three quarters past ten. At noon we again met the river Rahad, which now had turned to the westward of north, and by its sides we pitched our tents near the huts of the Arabs, called Cohala, a stationary tribe, that do not live in tents, but are tributary to the Mek, and regularly pay all the taxes and exactions the government of Sennaar lays upon them; and from these, therefore, we were not under any apprehension.

On the 23d, at six o'clock in the morning, we left the Cohala, continuing along the river Rahad, which here runs a very little to the eastward of north. At three o'clock we alighted at Kumar, another station of the same Arabs of Cohala, on the river side. This river, here called Rahad, or Thunder, winds the most of any stream in Abyssinia. It begins not far from Tchelga, passes between Kuara and Sennaar, separating Abyssinia from Nubia, and making, with the river Atbara, the Astaboras, or Tacazze, and the Nile, a perfect island, whereas before it was only a peninsula. It seems to intercept all the springs that would go down to the middle of the peninsula, from the high country of Abyssinia, and is probably the reason of the great dearth of water there. While it is in Abyssinia it is called Shimfa. It falls into the Nile at Habharras, about thirty-eight miles north of Sennaar.

The quarrel between our two conductors was so little made up, that the king's servant would not travel with us, but always went half a day before, and we joined him when we encamped in the evening. We did not pay him the compliment of asking him why he did this, but allowed him to take his own way, which he seemed not to be pleased with, giving many hints at night, that he had, all his life, been averse to the having any thing to do with white people.

We set out at five in the afternoon from Kumar, and in the close of the evening met several men, on horseback and on foot, coming out from among the bushes, who endeavoured to carry off one of our camels. We indeed were somewhat alarmed, and were going to prepare for resistance. The camel they had taken away had on it the king's and Shekh Adelan's presents, and some other things for our future need. Our clothes too, books, and papers, were upon the same camel. Adelan's servant, though he was at

first suprised, did not lose his presence of mind; he soon knew these Arabs could not be robbers, and guessed it to be a piece of malice of the king's servant to frighten us, and extort money from us, in order to obtain restitution of the camel. He therefore rode up to one of the villages of the Arabs, to ask them who those were that had taken away our camel.

In one of the huts he found the king's servant regaling himself; upon which he said to him, "I suppose, Mahomet, you have taken charge of that camel, and will bring it with you to Sennaar; it has your master's presents, and mine also, upon it:" and saying this, he rode off to join us, and to punish those that had taken the camel, who, we were sure after this notification, must follow us. We kept on at a very brisk pace, for it was eleven o'clock before they came up to where we were encamped for the night, bringing our camel, which they had taken along with them, with an Arab on horseback, attended with two on foot, and with them the king's servant. I did not seem at all to have understood the affair, only that robbers had taken away our camel. But it did not sit so easy upon the Arabs, who did not know there was any with us but the king's servant, and who wanted to frighten us for not making them a present for eating their grass and drinking their water. At first, Adelan's servant refused to take the camel again upon any terms, insisting that the Cohala should carry it to Sennaar; but, after a great many words, I determined to make peace, upon condition they should furnish us with milk, wherever they had cattle, till we arrived at Sennaar. This was very readily consented to; and as this affair probably was owing to the malice of the king's servant, so it ended without further trouble.

On the 24th, we set out at half after five in the morning, and passed through several small villages of

Cohala on the right and on the left, till at eleven we came to the river Dender, standing now in pools, but by the vast wideness of its banks, and the great deepness of its bed, all of white sand, it should seem that in time of rain it will contain nearly as much water as the Nile. The banks are everywhere thick overgrown with the rack and jujeb tree, especially the latter. The wood, which had continued mostly from Beyla, here failed us entirely, and reached no further towards Sennaar. These two sorts of trees, however, were in very great beauty, and of a prodigious size. Here we found the main body of Cohala, with all their cattle, living in perfect security both from Arabs and from the plague of the fly. They were as good as their word to us in supplying us plentifully with excellent milk, which we had scarcely ever tasted since we left Gondar

At six o'clock in the evening of the 24th, we set out from a shady place of repose on the banks of the Dender, through a large plain, with not a tree before us; but we presently found ourselves encompassed with a number of villages, nearly of a size, and placed at equal distances in form of a semicircle, the roofs of the houses in shape of cones, as are all those within the rains. The plain was all of a red, soapy earth, and the corn just sown. This whole country is in perpetual cultivation; and though at this time it had a bare look, would no doubt have a magnificent one when waving with grain. At nine we halted at a village of Pagan Nuba. These are all soldiers of the Mek of Sennaar, cantoned in these villages, which, at the distance of four or five miles, surround the whole capital. They are either purchased, or taken by force, from Fazuclo, and the provinces to the south upon the mountains Dyre and Tegla. Having settlements and provisions given them, as also

arms put in their hands, they never wish to desert, but live a very domestic and sober life. Many of them that I have conversed with, seem a much gentler sort of negro than those from Bahar el Aice, that is, than those of whom the Funge, or government of Sennaar, are composed.

These have small features likewise, but are woolly-headed, and flat-nosed, like other negroes, and speak a language rather pleasant and sonorous, but radically different from any I have heard. Though the Mek, and their masters at Sennaar, pretend to be Mahometans, yet they have never attempted to convert these Nuba; on the contrary, they entertain, in every village, a certain number of Pagan priests, who have soldiers pay, and assist them in the offices of their religion. Not knowing their language perfectly, nor their customs, it is impossible to say any thing about their religion. Very few of the common sort of them speak Arabic. A false account, in these cases, is always worse than no account at all. I never found one of their priests, who could speak so much Arabic as to be able to give any information about the objects of their worship in distinct and unequivocal terms; but this was from my not understanding them, and their not understanding me, not from any desire of concealment, or shyness on their part; on the contrary, they seemed always inclined to agree with me, when they did not comprehend my meaning; and there is the danger of being misinformed.

They pay adoration to the moon; and that their worship is performed with pleasure and satisfaction, is obvious every night that she shines. Coming out from the darkness of their huts, they say a few words upon seeing her brightness, and testify great joy, by motions of their feet and hands, at the first appearance of the new moon. I never saw them pay any attention

to the sun, either rising or setting, advancing to, or receding from, the meridian; but, as far as I could learn, they worship a tree, and likewise a stone, though I never could find out what tree or stone it was, only that it did not exist in the country of Sennaar, but in that where they were born. Their priests seemed to have great influence over them, but through fear only, and not from affection. They are distinguished by thick copper bracelets about their wrists, as also sometimes one, and sometimes two, about their ancles.

These villages are called Dahera, which seems to me to be the same word as Dashrah, the name given to the Kabyles, or people in Barbary, who live in fixed huts on the mountains. But not having made myself master enough of the Kabyles language when in Barbary, and being totally ignorant of that of the Nuba we are now speaking of, I cannot pretend to pursue this resemblance farther. They are immoderately fond of swine's flesh, and maintain great herds of them in their possession. The hogs are of a small kind, generally marked with black and white, exceedingly prolific, and exactly resembling a species of that kind common in the north of Scotland. The Nuba are not circumcised. They very rarely turn Mahometans, but the generality of their children do. Few of them advance higher than to be soldiers and officers in their own corps. The Mek contains about twelve thousand of these near Sennaar, to keep the Arabs in subjection. They are very quiet, and scarcely ever known to be guilty of any robberies or mutinous disorders, declaring always for the master, that is, the great one set over them. There is no running water in all that immense plain they inhabit; it is all procured from draw-wells. We saw them cleaning one, which I measured, and was nearly eight fathoms deep. In a climate so violently hot as this, there is very little

need of fuel; neither have they any, there being no turf, or any thing resembling it in the country, no wood, not even a tree, since we had passed the river Dender. However, they never eat their meat raw as in Abyssinia; but with the stalk of the dora, or millet, and the dung of camels, they make ovens under ground, in which they roast their hogs whole, in a very cleanly, and not disagreeable manner, keeping the skins on till they are perfectly baked. They had neither flint nor steel wherewith to light their fire at first, but do it in a manner still more expeditious, by taking a small piece of stick, and making a sharp point to it, which they hold perpendicular, and then make a small hole, of nearly the same size, in another piece of stick, which they lay horizontal; they put the one within the other, and between their two hands, they turn the perpendicular stick (in the same manner that we do a chocolate mill), when both these sticks take fire, and flame in a moment upon the friction; so perfectly dry and prepared is every thing here upon the surface to take fire, notwithstanding they are every year subject to six months rain.

On the 25th, at four o'clock in the afternoon, we set out from the villages of the Nuba, intending to arrive at Basboch, where is the ferry over the Nile; but we had scarcely advanced two miles into the plain, when we were inclosed by a violent whirlwind, or what is called at sea the waterspout. The plain was red earth, which had been plentifully moistened by a shower in the night-time. The unfortunate camel that had been taken by the Cohala, seemed to be nearly in the centre of its vortex. It was lifted and thrown down at a considerable distance, and several of its ribs broken. Although, as far as I could guess, I was not near the centre, it whirled me off my feet, and threw me down upon my face, so as to make my nose gush

out with blood. Two of the servants likewise had the same fate. It plaistered us all over with mud, almost as smoothly as could have been done with a trowel. It took away my sense and breathing for an instant, and my mouth and nose were full of mud when I recovered. I guess the sphere of its action to be about 200 feet. It demolished one half of a small hut, as if it had been cut through with a knife, and dispersed the materials all over the plain, leaving the other half standing.

As soon as we recovered ourselves, we took refuge in a village, for fear only, for we saw no vestige of any other whirlwind. It involved a great quantity of rain, which the Nuba of the villages told us was very fortunate, and portended good luck to us, and a prosperous journey; for they said, that had dust and sand arisen with the whirlwind, in the same proportion it would have done had not the earth been moistened, we should all infallibly have been suffocated; and they cautioned us, by saying, that tempests were very frequent in the beginning and end of the rainy season, and whenever we should see one of them coming, to fall down upon our faces, keeping our lips close to the ground, and so let it pass; and thus it would neither have power to carry us off our feet, nor suffocate us, which was the ordinary case.

Our kind landlords, the Nuba, gave us a hearty welcome, and helped us to wash our clothes first, and then to dry them. When I was stripped naked, they saw the blood running from my nose, and said, "they could not have thought, that one so white as me could have been capable of bleeding." They gave us a piece of roasted hog, which we ate (except Ismael and the Mahometans), very much to the satisfaction of the Nuba. On the other hand, as our camel was lame, we ordered one of our Mahometan servants to kill it,

and take as much of it as would serve themselves that night; we also provided against want ourselves the next day. The rest we gave among our new-acquired acquaintance, the Nuba of the village, who did not fail to make a feast upon it for several days after; and, in recompence for our liberality, they provided us with a large jar of bouza, not very good, indeed, but better than the well water. This I repaid by tobacco, beads, pepper, and stibium, which, I saw plainly, was infinitely more than they expected. Although we had been a good deal surprised at the sudden and violent effects of the whirlwind of that day, and severely felt the bruises it had occasioned, yet we passed a very social and agreeable evening; those only of the Nuba, who had been any time at Sennaar, speak a bad kind of Arabic, as well as their own language. I had seldom in my life, upon a journey, passed a more comfortable night. I had a very neat, clean hut, entirely to myself, and a Greek servant that sat near me. Some of the Nuba watched for us all night, and took care of our beasts and baggage. They sung and replied to one another alternately, in notes full of pleasant melody,

Et cantare pares et respondere parati—

VIRGIL.

till I fell fast asleep, involuntarily, and with regret; for, though bruised, we were not fatigued, but rather discouraged, having gone no further than two miles that day.

The landlord of the hut where I was asleep, having prepared for our safety and that of our baggage, thought himself bound in duty to go and give immediate information to the prime minister of the unexpected guests that then occupied his house. He found

Adelan at supper, but was immediately admitted, and a variety of questions asked him, which he answered fully. He described our colour, our number, the unusual size and number of our fire-arms, the poorness of our attire, and above all, our great cheerfulness, quietness, and affability, our being contented with eating any thing, and, in particular, mentioned the hogs flesh. One man then present, testifying abhorrence to this, Adelan said of me to our landlord, "Why, he is a soldier and a Kafr like yourself. A soldier and a Kafr, when travelling in a strange country, should eat every thing, and so does every other man that is wise. Has he not a servant of mine with him?" He answered, "Yes, and a servant of the king too; but he had left them, and was gone forward to Sennaar." "Go you with them," says he, "and stay with them at Basboch till I have time to send for them to town." He had returned from Aira long before we arose, and told us the conversation, which was great comfort to us all; for we were not much pleased with the king's servant going before, as we had every reason to think he was disaffected towards us.

On the 26th, at six o'clock in the morning, we set out from this village of Nuba, keeping something to the westward of S. W. our way being still across this immense plain. All the morning there were terrible storms of thunder and lightning, some rain, and one shower of so large drops, that it wet us to the skin in an instant. It was quite calm, and every drop fell perpendicularly upon us. I think I never in my life felt so cold a rain, yet it was not disagreeable; for the day was close and hot, and we should have wished every now and then to have had so moderate a refrigeration; this, however, was rather too abundant. The villages of the Nuba were, on all sides, throughout

this plain. At nine o'clock we arrived at Basboch, which is a large collection of huts of these people, and has the appearance of a town.

The governor, a venerable old man of about seventy, who was so feeble that he could scarcely walk, received us with great complacency, only saying, when I took him by the hand, "O Christian! what dost thou, at such a time, in such a country?" I was surprised at the politeness of his speech, when he called me Nazarani, the civil term for Christian in the East; whereas Infidel is the general term among these brutish people; but it seems he had been several times at Cairo. I had here a very clean and comfortable hut to lodge in, though we were sparingly supplied with provisions all the time we were there, but never were suffered to fast a whole day together.

Basboch is on the eastern bank of the Nile, not a quarter of a mile from the ford below. The river here runs north and south; towards the sides it is shallow, but deep in the middle of the current, and in this part it is much infested with crocodiles. Sennaar is two miles and a half S. S. W. of it. We heard the evening drum very distinctly, and not without anxiety, when we reflected to what a brutish people, according to all accounts, we were about to trust ourselves. The village of Aira, where the vizir Adelan had then his quarters, was three miles south and by west.

Next morning, the 27th, Shekh Adelan's servant left us to the charge of the Nuba, to give his master an account of his journey, and our safe arrival. He found Mahomet, the king's servant, our other guide, before him there, and Adelan well informed of all that had passed relating to Fidele, though not from Mahomet; for as soon as he began to mention that

he had found us at Teawa, Adelan said, in a very angry stile, "Will no one save me the disgrace of hanging that wretch?" Adelan sent back his servant to inform us, that, two days afterwards, we should be admitted. Mahomet, the king's servant, too, came back with him, and staid till the evening; then he returned to Sennaar; but he did not give us the satisfaction to tell us one word of what the king had said to him about us, or how we were likely to be received, leaving us altogether in suspense.

On the 29th, leave was sent us to enter Sennaar. It was not without some difficulty that we got our quadrant and heavy baggage safely carried down the hill, for the banks are very steep to the edge of the water. The intention of our assistants was to slide the quadrant down the hill, in its case, which would have utterly destroyed it; and as our boat was but a very indifferent embarkation, it was obliged to make several turns to and fro before we got all our several packages landed on the western side. This assemblage, and the passage of our camels, seemed to have excited the appetite, or the curiosity, of the crocodiles. One, in particular, swam several times backwards and forwards, along the side of the boat, without, however, making any attack upon any of us; but, being exceedingly tired of such company, upon his second or third venture over, I fired at him with a rifle gun, and shot him directly under his fore-shoulder in the belly. The wound was undoubtedly mortal, and very few animals could have lived a moment after receiving it. He, however, dived to the bottom, leaving the water deeply tinged with his blood. Nor did we see him again at that time; but the people at the ferry brought him to me the day after, having found him perfectly dead. He was about twelve feet long; and

the boatmen told me that these are by much the most dangerous, being more fierce and active than the large ones. The people of Sennaar eat the crocodile, especially the Nuba. I never tasted it myself, but it looks very much like Conger eel.

CHAP. VIII.

Conversation with the King—With Shekh Adelan—Interview with the King's Ladies, &c.

We were conducted by Adelan's servant to a very spacious good house belonging to the Shekh himself, having two storeys, a long quarter of a mile from the king's palace. He left a message for us to repose ourselves, and in a day or two to wait upon the king, and that he should send to tell us when we were to come to him. This we resolved to have complied with most exactly; but the very next morning, the 30th of April, there came a servant from the palace, to summon us to wait upon the king, which we immediately obeyed. I took with me three servants, black Soliman, Ismael the Turk, and my Greek servant Michael. The palace covers a prodigious deal of ground. It is all of one storey, built of clay, and the floors of earth. The chambers through which we passed were all unfurnished, and seemed as if a great many of them had formerly been destined as barracks for soldiers, of whom I did not see above fifty on guard. The king was in a small room, not twenty feet square, to which we ascended by two short flights of narrow steps. The floor of the room was covered

with broad square tiles; over it was laid a Persian carpet, and the walls hung with tapestry of the same country; the whole very well kept, and in good order.

The king was sitting upon a mattress, laid on the ground, which was likewise covered with a Persian carpet, and round him was a number of cushions of Venetian cloth of gold. His dress did not correspond with this magnificence; for it was nothing but a large loose shirt of Surat blue cotton cloth, which seemed not to differ from the same worn by his servants, except that all round the edges of it the seams were double stitched with white silk, and likewise round the neck. His head was uncovered; he wore his own short black hair, and was as white in colour as an Arab. He seemed to be a man about thirty-four, his feet were bare, but covered by his shirt. He had a very plebean countenance, on which was stamped no decided character; I should rather have guessed him to be a soft, timid, irresolute man. At my coming forward and kissing his hand, he looked at me for a minute as if undetermined what to say. He then asked for an Abyssinian interpreter, as there are many of these about the palace. I said to him in Arabic, "That I apprehended I understood as much of that language as would enable me to answer any question he had to put to me." Upon which he turned to the people that were with him, "Downright Arabic, indeed! You did not learn that language in Habesh?" said he to me. I answered, "No; I have been in Egypt, Turkey, and Arabia, where I learned it; but I have likewise often spoken it in Abyssinia, where Greek, Turkish, and several other languages, were used." He said, "Impossible! he did not think they knew any thing of languages, excepting their own, in Abyssinia."

There were sitting in the side of the room, opposite to him, four men dressed in white cotton shirts, with a white shawl covering their heads and part of their face, by which it was known they were religious men, or men of learning, or of the law. One of these answered the king's doubt of the Abyssinians knowledge in languages. "They have languages enough; and you know that Habesh is called the paradise of asses." During this conversation, I took the sheriffe of Mecca's letter, also one from the king of Abyssinia; I gave him the king's first, and then the sheriffe's. He took them both as I gave them, but laid aside the king's upon a cushion, till he had read the sheriffe's. After this he read the king's, and called immediately again for an Abyssinian interpreter; upon which I said nothing, supposing, perhaps, he might choose to make him deliver some message to me in private, which he would not have his people hear. But it was pure confusion and absence of mind, for he never spoke a word to him when he came. "You are a physician and a soldier," says the king. "Both, in time of need," said I. "But the sheriffe's letter tells me also, that you are a nobleman in the service of a great king that they call Englise-man, who is master of all the Indies, and who has Mahometan as well as Christian subjects, and allows them all to be governed by their own laws." "Though I never said so to the sheriffe," replied I, "yet it is true; I am as noble as any individual in my nation, and am also servant to the greatest king now reigning upon earth, of whose dominions, it is likewise truly said, these Indies are but a small part." "The greatest king!" says he that spoke about the asses, "you should not say that: You forgot the grand signior; there are four, Othman, Fersee, Bornow, and Habesh*." "I

* The kings of Turkey, Persia, Bernoo, and Abyssinia.—E.

neither forgot the grand signior, nor do him wrong," replied I. "What I have said, I have said." "Kafrs and slaves, all of them," says Ismael; "there is the Turk, the king of England, and the king of France; what kings are Bornow and the rest?—Kafrs." "How comes it," says the king, "you that are so noble and learned, that you know all things, all languages, and so brave that you fear no danger, but pass, with two or three old men, into such countries as this and Habesh, where Baady, my father, perished with an army —how comes it that you do not stay at home and enjoy yourself, eat, drink, take pleasure and rest, and not wander like a poor man, a prey to every danger?" "You, sir," I replied, "may know some of this sort of men; certainly you do know them; for there are in your religion, as well as in mine, men of learning, and those too of great rank and nobility, who, on account of sins they have committed, or vows they have made, renounce the world, its riches and pleasures: They lay down their nobility, and become humble and poor, so as often to be insulted by wicked and low men, not having the fear of God before their eyes." "True, these are Dervish," said the other three men. "I am, then, one of these Dervish," said I, "content with the bread that is given me, and bound for some years to travel in hardships and danger, doing all the good I can to poor and rich, serving every man, and hurting none." "Tybe! that is well," says the king. "And how long have you been travelling about?" adds one of the others. "Near twenty years," said I. "You must be very young," says the king, "to have committed so many sins, and so early; they must all have been with women?" "Part of them, I suppose, were," replied I; "but I did not say that I was one of those who travelled on account of their sins, but that there were some Dervishes that did so on account of their vows, and some to learn wisdom." He now

made a sign, and a slave brought a cushion, which I would have refused, but he forced me to sit down upon it.

I found afterwards who the three men were who had joined in our conversation. The first was Ali Mogrebi, a native of Morocco, who was Cadi, or chief judge at Sennaar, and was then fallen into disgrace with the two brothers, Mahomet Abou Kalec, governor of Kordofan, and Shekh Adelan, prime minister at Sennaar, then encamped at Aira at the head of the horse and Nuba, levying the tax upon the Arabs as they went down, out of the limits of the rains, into the sandy countries below Atbara, to protect their cattle from the fly. Another of these three was Cadi of Kordofan, in the interest of Mahomet Abou Kalec, and spy upon the king. The third was a saint in the neighbourhood, conservator of a large extent of ground, where great crops of dora not only grow, but when threshed out are likewise kept in large excavations called Matamores; the place they call Shaddly. This man was esteemed another Joseph among the Funge, who accumulated grain in years of plenty, that he might distribute it at small prices among the poor when scarcity came. He was held in very great reverence in the neighbourhood of Sennaar.

The Cadi then asked me, "If I knew when Hagiuge Magiuge was to come?" Remembering my old learned friend at Teawa, I scarce could forbear laughing. "I have no wish to know any thing about him," said I; "I hope those days are far off, and will not happen in my time." "What do your books say concerning him?" says he, affecting a look of great wisdom: "Do they agree with ours?" "I don't know that," said I, "till I hear what is writen in your books." "Hagiuge Maguige," says he, "are little people, not so big as bees, or like the zimb, or fly of

Sennaar, that come in great swarms out of the earth, aye, in multitudes that cannot be counted; two of their chiefs are to ride upon an ass, and every hair of that ass is to be a pipe, and every pipe is to play a different kind of music, and all that hear and follow them are carried to hell." "I know them not," said I, "and, in the name of the Lord, I fear them not, were they twice as little as you say they are, and twice as numerous. I trust in God I shall never be so fond of music as to go to hell after an ass, for all the tunes that he or they can play." The king laughed violently. I rose to go away, for I was heartily tired of the conversation. I whispered the Abyssinian servant in Amharic, to ask when I should bring a trifle I had to offer the king. He said, not that night, as I should be tired, but desired that I should now go home, and he would send me notice when to come. I accordingly went away, and found a number of people in the street, all having some taunt or affronting matter to say. I passed through the great square before the palace, and could not help shuddering, upon reflection, at what had happened in that spot to the unfortunate M. du Roule and his companions, though under a protection which should have secured them from all danger, every part of which I was then unprovided with.

The drum beat a little after six o'clock in the evening. We then had a very comfortable dinner sent us, camels flesh stewed with an herb of a viscous slimy substance, called bammia. After having dined, and finished the journal of the day, I fell to unpacking my instruments, the barometer and thermometer first, and, after having hung them up, was conversing with Adelan's servant when I should pay my visit to his master. About eight o'clock came a servant from the palace, telling me now was the time to bring the present to the king. I sorted the separate articles

with all the speed I could, and we went directly to the palace. The king was then sitting in a large apartment, as far as I could guess, at some distance from the former. He was naked, but had several clothes lying upon his knee, and about him, and a servant was rubbing him over with very stinking butter or grease, with which his hair was dropping, as if wet with water. Large as the room was, it could be smelled through the whole of it. The king asked me, if ever I greased myself as he did? I said, Very seldom. but fancied it would be very expensive. He then told me that it was elephant's grease, which made people strong, and preserved the skin very smooth. I said, I thought it very proper, but could not bear the smell of it, though my skin should turn as rough as an elephant's for the want of it. He said, "If I had used it, my hair would not have turned so red as it was, and that it would all become white presently, when that redness came off*. You may see the Arabs driven in here by the Daveina, and all their cattle taken from them, because they have no longer any grease for their hair. The sun first turns it red, and then perfectly white; and you'll know them in the street by their hair being the colour of yours. As for the smell, you will see that cured presently."

After having rubbed him abundantly with grease, they brought a pretty large horn, and in it something scented, about as liquid as honey. It was plain that civet was a great part of the composition. The king went out at the door, I suppose into another room, and there two men deluged him over with pitchers of cold water, whilst, as I imagine, he was stark naked. He then returned, and a slave anointed him with this sweet ointment; after which he sat down, as completely dressed, being just going to his women's apart-

* Mr Bruce's hair had a slight natural tinge of that colour.—E.

ment, where he was to sup. I told him I wondered why he did not use rose water, as in Abyssinia, Arabia, and Cairo. He said, he had it often from Cairo, when the merchants arrived; but as it was now long since any came, his people could not make more, for the rose would not grow in his country, though the women made something like it of lemon flower.

His toilet being finished, I then produced my present, which I told him the king of Abyssinia had sent him, hoping that, according to the faith and custom of nations, he would not only protect me while here, but send me safely and speedily out of his dominions into Egypt. He answered, There was a time when he could have done all this, and more, but those times were changed. Sennaar was in ruin, and was not like what it once was. He then ordered some perfumed sorbet to be brought for me to drink in his presence, which is a pledge that your person is in safety. I thereupon withdrew, and he went to his ladies.

It was not till the 8th of May I had my audience of Shekh Adelan at Aira, which is three miles and a half from Sennaar; we walked out early in the morning, for the greatest part of the way along the side of the Nile, which had no beauty, being totally divested of trees, the bottom foul and muddy, and the edges of the water, white with small concretions of calcareous earth, which, with the bright sun upon them, dazzled and affected our eyes very much.

We then struck across a large sandy plain, without trees or bushes, and came to Adelan's habitation; two or three very considerable houses, of one storey, occupied the middle of a large square, each of whose sides was at least half of an English mile. Instead of a wall to inclose this square, was a high fence or impalement of strong reeds, canes, or stalks of dora (I do not know which), in fascines strongly joined together by

stakes and cords. On the outside of the gate, on each hand, were six houses of a slighter construction than the rest; close upon the fence were sheds where the soldiers lay, the horses picqueted before them with their heads turned towards the sheds, and their food laid before them on the ground; above each soldier's sleeping-place, covered only on the top and open in the sides, were hung a lance, a small oval shield, and a large broad-sword. These, I understood, were chiefly quarters for couriers, who, being Arabs, were not taken into the court or square, but shut out at night.

Within the gate was a number of horses, with the soldiers barracks behind them; they were all picqueted in ranks, their faces to their masters barracks. It was one of the finest sights I ever saw of the kind. They were all above sixteen hands high, of the breed of the old Saracen horses, all finely made, and as strong as our coach horses, but exceedingly nimble in their motion; rather thick and short in the forehand, but with the most beautiful eyes, ears, and heads in the world; they were mostly black, some of them black and white, some of them milk-white, foaled so, not white by age, with white eyes and white hoofs, not perhaps a great recommendation.

A steel shirt of mail hung upon each man's quarters, opposite to his horse, and by it an antelope's skin, made soft like shamoy, with which it was covered from the dew of the night. A head-piece of copper, without crest or plumage, was suspended by a lace above the shirt of mail, and was the most picturesque part of the trophy. To these was added an enormous broad-sword, in a red leather scabbard; and upon the pummel hung two thick gloves, not divided into fingers as ours, but like hedgers gloves, their fingers in one poke. They told me, that, with-

in that inclosure at Aira, there were 400 horses, which, with the riders, and armour complete for each of them, were all the property of Shekh Adelan, every horseman being his slave, and bought with his money. There were five or six (I know not which) of these squares or inclosures, none of them half a mile from the other, which contained the king's horses, slaves, and servants. Whether they were all in as good order as Adelan's I cannot say, for I did not go further; but no body of horse could ever be more magnificently disposed under the direction of any Christian power.

Adelan was then sitting upon a piece of the trunk of a palm-tree, in the front of one of these divisions of his horses, which he seemed to be contemplating with pleasure: a number of black people, his own servants and friends, were standing around him. He had on a long drab-coloured camblet gown, lined with yellow sattin, and a camlet cap like a head-piece, with two short points that covered his ears. This, it seems, was his dress when he rose early in the morning to visit his horses, which he never neglected. The Shekh was a man above six feet high, and rather corpulent, had a heavy walk, seemingly more from affectation of grandeur, than want of agility. He was about sixty, of the colour and features of an Arab, and not of a Negro, but had rather more beard than falls to the lot of people in this country; large piercing eyes, and a determined, though, at the same time, a very pleasing countenance. Upon my coming near him, he got up; "You that are a horseman," says he without any salutation, "what would your king of Habesh give for these horses?" "What king," answered I, in the same tone, "would not give any price for such horses, if he knew their value?" "Well," replies he, in a lower voice, to the people about him, "if we are

forced to go to Habesh, as Baady was, we will carry our horses along with us." I understood by this he alluded to the issue of his approaching quarrel with the king.

We then went into a large saloon, hung round with mirrors and scarlet damask; in one of the longest sides, were two large sofas covered with crimson and yellow damask, and large cushions of cloth of gold, like to the king's. He now pulled off his camlet gown and cap, and remained in a crimson sattin coat reaching down below his knees, which lapped over at the breast, and was girt round his waist with a scarf or sash, in which he had stuck a short dagger in an ivory sheath, mounted with gold; and one of the largest and most beautiful amethysts upon his finger that ever I saw, mounted plain, without any diamonds, and a small gold ear-ring in one of his ears.

"Why have you come hither," says he to me, "without arms and on foot, and without attendants?" *Yagoube.* "I was told that horses were not kept at Sennaar, and brought none with me." *Adelan.* "You suppose you have come through great dangers, and so you have. But what do you think of me, who am day and night out in the fields, surrounded by hundreds and thousands of Arabs, all of whom would eat me alive if they dared?" I answered, "A brave man, used to command as you are, does not look to the number of his enemies, but to their abilities; a wolf does not fear ten thousand sheep more than he does one." *Ad.* "True; look out at the door; these are their chiefs whom I am now taxing, and I have brought them hither that they may judge from what they see whether I am ready for them or not." *Yag.* "You could not do more properly; but, as to my own affairs, I wait upon you from the king of Abyssi-

nia, desiring safe conduct through your country into Egypt, with his royal promise, that he is ready to do the like for you again, or any other favour you may call upon him for." He took the letter and read it. *Ad.* "The king of Abyssinia may be assured I am always ready to do more for him than this. It is true, since the mad attempt upon Sennaar, and the next still madder, to replace old Baady upon the throne, we have had no formal peace, but neither are we at war. We understand one another as good neighbours ought to do; and what else is peace?" *Yag.* "You know I am a stranger and traveller, seeking my way home. I have nothing to do with peace or war between nations. All I beg is a safe conduct through your kingdom, and the rights of hospitality bestowed in such cases on every common stranger; and one of the favours I beg is, your acceptance of a small present. I bring it not from home; I have been long absent from thence, or it would have been better." *Ad.* "I'll not refuse it, but it is quite unnecessary. I have faults like other men, but to hurt, or ransack strangers, was never one of them. Mahomet Abou Kalec, my brother, is, however, a much better man to strangers than I am; you will be lucky if you meet him here; if not, I will do for you what I can, when once the confusion of these Arabs is over."

I gave him the Sherriffe's letter, which he opened, looked at it, and laid by without reading, saying only, "Aye, Metical is a good man, he sometimes takes care of our people going to Mecca; for my part, I never was there, and probably never shall." I then presented my letter from Ali Bey to him. He placed it upon his knee, and gave a slap upon it with his open hand. *Ad.* "What! do you not know, have you not heard, Mahomet Abou Dahab, his Hasnadar, has rebelled against him, banished him out of Cairo, and

now sits in his place? But, don't be disconcerted at that; I know you to be a man of honour and prudence; if Mahomet, my brother, does not come, as soon as I can get leisure I will dispatch you." The servant that had conducted me to Sennaar, and was then with us, went forward close to him, and said, in a kind of whisper, "Should he go often to the king?" "When he pleases; he may go to see the town, and take a walk, but never alone, and also to the palace, that, when he returns to his own country, he may report he saw a king at Sennaar, that neither knows how to govern, nor will suffer others to teach him; who knows not how to make war, and yet will not sit in peace." I then took my leave of him; but there was a plentiful breakfast in the other room, to which he sent us, and which went far to comfort Hagi Ismael for the misfortune of his patron, Ali Bey. At going out, I took my leave by kissing his hand, which he submitted to without reluctance. "Shekh," said I, "when I pass these Arabs in the square, I hope it will not disoblige you if I converse with some of them out of curiosity?" *Ad.* "By no means, as much as you please; but don't let them know where they can find you at Sennaar, or they will be in your house from morning till night, will eat up all your victuals, and then, in return, will cut your throat, if they can meet you upon your journey.

I returned home to Sennaar, very well pleased with my reception at Aira. I had not seen, since I left Gondar, a man so open and frank in his manners, and who spoke, without disguise, what apparently he had in his heart; but he was exceedingly engaged in business, and it was of such extent that it seemed to me impossible to be brought to an end in a much longer time than I proposed staying at Sennaar. The distance, too, between Aira and that town was a very

great discouragement to me. The whole way was covered with insolent, brutish people; so that every man we met between Sennaar and Aira produced some altercation, some demand of presents, gold, cloth, tobacco, and a variety of other disagreeable circumstances, which had always the appearance of ending in something serious.

I had a long conversation with the Arabs I met with at Aira, and from them I learned pretty nearly the situation of the different clans, or tribes, in Atbara.—These were all in their way northward to the respective countries, in the sands to the eastward of Mendera and Barbar. These sands, so barren and desolate the rest of the year, were beginning now to be crowded with multitudes of cattle and inhabitants. The fly, in the flat and fertile mold, which composes all the soil to the southward of Sennaar, had forced this number of people to migrate, which they very well knew was to cost them at least one half of their substance; of such consequence is the weakest instrument in the hand of Providence. The troops of Sennaar, few in number, but well-provided with every thing, stood ready to cut these people off from their access to the sands, till every chief of a tribe had given in a well-verified inventory of his whole stock, and made a composition, at passing, with Shekh Adelan.

All subterfuge was in vain. The fly, in possession of the fertile country, inexorably pursued every single camel till he took refuge in the sands, and there he was to stay till the rains ceased; and if, in the interim, it was discovered that any concealment of number, or quality, had been made, they were again to return in the beginning of September to their old pastures; and in this second passage, any fraud, whether real, or alleged, was punished with great severity.—Resistance had been often tried, and as often found in-

effectual. However great their numbers, encumbered with families and baggage as they were, they had always fallen a sacrifice to those troops, well-mounted and armed, that awaited them in their way within sight of their own homes. Arrived once in these sands, they were quiet during the rains, having paid their passage northward; and so they were afterwards, for the same reason, when they came again to their own station, southward, when those rains had ceased.

It may be asked reasonably, "What does the government of Sennaar do with that immense number of camels, which they receive from all those tribes of Arabs in their passage by Sennaar?" To this I answer, "That all this tribute is not paid in kind." The different tribes possessing so many camels, or so many other cattle, have a quantum laid upon them at an average value. This is paid in gold, or in slaves, the rest in kind; so many for the maintenance of the king and government; for there is no flesh commonly used at Sennaar in the markets but that of camels. The residue is bought by the merchants of Dongola, and sent into Egypt, where they supply that great consumption of these animals made every year by the caravans going to Mecca.

One thing had made a very strong impression on me, which was the contemptuous manner in which Adelan expressed himself as to his sovereign. I was satisfied, that, with some address, I could keep myself in favour with either of them; but, in the terms they then were, or were very soon to be, I could not but fear I was likely to fall into trouble between the two.

The next morning, after I came home from Aira, I was agreeably surprised by a visit from Hagi Belal, to whom I had been recommended by Metical Aga, and to whom Ibrahim Seraff, the English broker at Jidda,

had addressed me for any money I should need at Sennaar. He welcomed me with great kindness, and repeated testimonies of joy and wonder at my safe arrival. He had been down in Atbara at Gerri, or some villages near it, with merchandise, and had not yet seen the king since he came home, but gave me the very worst description possible of the country, insomuch, that there seemed to be not a spot, but the one I then stood on, in which I was not in imminent danger of destruction, from a variety of independent causes, which it seemed not possible in my power to avoid. He sent me in the evening some refreshments, which I had long been unaccustomed to; some tea, excellent coffee, some honey and brown sugar, several bottles of rack, likewise nutmegs, cinnamon, ginger, and some very good dates, of the dry kind, which he had brought with him from Atbara.

Hagi Belal was a native of Morocco. He had been at Cairo, and also at Jidda and Mocha. He knew the English well, and professed himself both obliged and attached to them. It was some days before I ventured to speak to him upon money business, or upon any probability of finding assistance here at Sennaar. He gave me little hopes of the latter, repeating to me what I very well knew, about the disagreement of the king and Adelan. He seemed to place all his expectations, and those were but faint ones in the coming of Shekh Abou Kalec from Kordofan. He said, nothing could be expected from Shekh Adelan without going to Aira, for that he would never trust himself in Sennaar, in this king's life-time; but that the minister was absolute the moment he assembled his troops without the town.

One morning he came to me, after having been with the king, when I was myself preparing to go to the palace. He said, he had been sent for upon my

account, and had been questioned very narrowly what sort of a man I was. Having answered very favourably, both of me and my nation, he was asked for Metical Aga's letters, or any other letters he had received concerning me from Jidda; he said, that he had only shewn Metical's letter, wrote in the name of the sherriffe, as also one from himself; that there were several great officers of government present; and the Cadi (whom I had seen the first time I had been with the king) had read the letters aloud to them all: That one of them had asked, "How it came that such a man as I ventured to pass these deserts, with four or five old servants, and what it was I came to see?" that he answered, he apprehended my chief object at Sennaar was to be forwarded to my own country. It was also asked, "why I had not some Englishmen with me, as none of my servants were of that nation, but poor beggarly Kopts, Arabs, and Turks, who were none of them of my religion?" Belal answered, "That travellers through these countries must take up with such people as they can find going the same way; however, he believed some English servants had died in Abyssinia, which country I had left the first opportunity that had offered, being wearied by the perpetual war which prevailed." Upon which the king said, "He has chosen well, when he came into this country for peace. You know, Hagi Belal, I can do nothing for him; there is nothing in my hands. I could easier get him back into Abyssinia than forward him into Egypt. Who is it now that can pass into Egypt;" The Cadi then said, "Hagi Belal can get him to Suakem, and so to Jidda to his countrymen." To which Belal replied, "The king will find some way, when he thinks farther of it."

A few days after this, I had a message from the palace. I found the king sitting alone, apparently much

chagrined, and in ill-humour. He asked me in a very peevish manner, "If I was not yet gone?" To which I answered, "Your Majesty knows that it is impossible for me to go a step from Sennaar without assistance from you." He again asked me, in the same tone as before, "How I could think of coming that way?" I said, "Nobody imagined in Abyssinia, but that he was able to give a stranger safe conduct through his own dominions." He made no reply, but nodded a sign for me to depart; which I immediately did, and so finished this short, but disagreeable interview.

About four o'clock that same afternoon I was again sent for to the palace, when the king told me that several of his wives were ill, and desired that I would give them my advice, which I promised to do without difficulty, as all acquaintance with the fair sex had hitherto been much to my advantage. I must confess, however, that calling these the fair sex is not preserving a precision in terms. I was admitted into a large square apartment, very ill-lighted, in which were about fifty women, all perfectly black, without any covering but a very narrow piece of cotton rag about their waists. While I was musing whether or not these all might be queens, or whether there was any queen among them, one of them took me by the hand and led me rudely enough into another apartment. This was much better lighted than the first. Upon a large bench, or sofa, covered with blue Surat cloth, sat three persons clothed from the neck to the feet with blue cotton shirts.

One of these, who, I found, was the favourite, was about six feet high, and corpulent beyond all proportion. She seemed to me, next to the elephant and rhinoceros, the largest living creature I had met with.—Her features were perfectly like those of a Negro; a

ring of gold passed through her under lip, and weighed it down, till, like a flap, it covered her chin, and left her teeth bare, which were very small and fine.—The inside of her lip she had made black with antimony. Her ears reached down to her shoulders, and had the appearance of wings; she had in each of them a large ring of gold, somewhat smaller than a man's little finger, and about five inches diameter. The weight of these had drawn down the hole where her ear was pierced so much, that three fingers might easily pass above the ring. She had a gold necklace, like what we used to call *esclavage*, of several rows, one below another, to which were hung rows of sequins pierced. She had on her ancles two manacles of gold, larger than any I had ever seen upon the feet of felons, with which I could not conceive it was possible for her to walk, but afterwards I found they were hollow.—The others were dressed pretty much in the same manner; only there was one that had chains, which came from her ears to the outside of each nostril, where they were fastened. There was also a ring put through the gristle of her nose, and which hung down to the opening of her mouth. I think she must have breathed with great difficulty. It had altogether something of the appearance of a horse's bridle. Upon my coming near them, the eldest put her hand to her mouth, and kissed it, saying, at the same time, in very vulgar Arabic, "Kifhalek howaja?" (how do you do merchant)—I never in my life was more pleased with distant salutations than at this time. I answered, "Peace be among you! I am a physician, and not a merchant."

I shall not entertain the reader with the multitude of their complaints; being a lady's physician, discretion and silence are my first duties. It is sufficient to say, that there was not one part of their whole bodies,

inside and outside, in which some of them had not ailments. The three queens insisted upon being blooded, which desire I complied with, as it was an operation that required short attendance; but, upon producing the lancets, their hearts failed them. They then all cried out for the Tabange, which, in Arabic, means a pistol; but what they meant by this word was, the cupping instrument, which goes off with a spring like the snap of a pistol. I had two of these with me, but not at that time in my pocket. I sent my servant home, however, to bring one, and, that same evening, performed the operation upon the three queens with great success. The room was overflowed with an effusion of royal blood, and the whole ended with their insisting upon my giving them the instrument itself, which I was obliged to do, after cupping two of their slaves before them, who had no complaints, merely to shew them how the operation was to be performed.

Another night I was obliged to attend them, and gave the queens, and two or three of the great ladies, vomits. I will spare my reader the recital of so nauseous a scene. The ipecacuanha had great effect, and warm water was drunk very copiously. The patients were numerous, and the floor of the room received all the evacuations. It was most prodigiously hot, and the horrid black figures, moaning and groaning with sickness all around me, gave me, I think, some slight idea of the punishment in the world below. My mortifications however, did not stop here. I observed that, on coming into their presence, the queens were all covered with cotton shirts; but no sooner did their complaints make part of our conversation, than, to my utmost surprise, each of them, in her turn, stript herself entirely naked, laying her cotton shirt loosely

on her lap, as she sat cross-legged like a tailor. The custom of going naked in these warm countries abolishes all delicacy concerning it. I could not but observe that the breasts of each of them reached the length of their knees.

This exceeding confidence on their part, they thought, merited some consideration on mine; and it was not without great astonishment that I heard the queen desire to see me in the like dishabille in which she had spontaneously put herself. The whole court of female attendants flocked to the spectacle. Refusal, or resistance, were in vain. I was surrounded with fifty or sixty women, all equal in stature and strength to myself. The whole of my cloathing was, like theirs, a long loose shirit of blue Surat cotton cloth, reaching from the neck down to the feet. The only terms I could possibly, and that with great difficulty, make for myself were, that they should be contented to strip me no farther than the shoulders and breast. Upon seeing the whiteness of my skin, they gave all a loud cry in token of dislike, and shuddered, seeming to consider it rather the effects of disease than natural. I think in my life I never felt so disagreeably. I have been in more than one battle, but surely I would joyfully have taken my chance again in any of them to have been freed from that examination. I could not help likewise reflecting, that, if the king had come in during this exhibition, the consequence would either have been impaling, or stripping off that skin whose colour they were so curious about; though I can solemnly declare there was not an idea in my breast, since ever I had the honour of seeing these royal beauties, that could have given his majesty of Sennar the smallest reason for jealousy; and I believe the same may be said of the sentiments of the ladies in

what regarded me. Ours was a mutual passion, but dangerous to no one concerned. I returned home with very different sensations from those I had felt after an interview with the beautiful Aiscach of Teawa. Indeed, it was impossible to be more chagrined at, or more disgusted with, my present situation than I was, and the more so, that my delivery from it appeared to be very distant, and the circumstances were more and more unfavourable every day.

An event happened, which added to my distress. Going one evening to wait upon the king, and being already within the palace, passing through a number of rooms that are now totally deserted, where the court of guard used to be kept, I met Mahomet, the king's servant, who accompanied us from Teawa. Such people, though in reality often enough drunk, yet if they happen to be sober at the time of their committing a crime, counterfeit drunkenness, in order to avail themselves of it as an excuse. This fellow, seeing me alone, came staggering up to me, saying, "Damn you, Yagoube, I have met you now! pay me for the trouble of going for you to Teawa;" and with that he put his arm to lay hold of me by the breast. I said to him, "Off hands, you ruffian!" and, taking him by the arm, I gave him such a push that he had very near fallen backward; on which he cried out, in great fury, "Give me fifty patakas (about twelve guineas), or I'll ham-string you this instant." I had always pistols in my pocket for an extremity; but I could not consider this drunkard, though armed, to have reduced me to that situation; I therefore immediately closed upon him, and, catching him by the throat, gave him a violent wrench backward, which threw him upon the ground. I then took his sword out of his hand; and in the instant my black servant Soliman appeared, who had

staid behind conversing with some acquaintance in the street. Several other black companions of this rascal likewise appeared; part seemed to defend, and part to intercede for him, but none to condemn him. Soliman, however, insisted upon carrying him before the king with his drawn sword in his hand. But how were we surprised, when the king's answer to our complaint was, "That the man was drunk, and that the people in that country were not used to see Franks, like me, walking in the street." He then gave Soliman a sharp reproof for having the presumption, as he called it, to disarm one of his servants in his palace, and immediately ordered his sword to be restored to him.

We were retiring full of thought what might be the occasion of this reception, when we were met by Kittou, Adelan's brother, who was left with the care of the town. I told the whole affair. He heard me very attentively, and with apparent concern. "It is all the king's fault; every slave does what he pleases," said he. "If I mention this to Adelan, he will order the drunkard's head to be struck off before the palace-gate. But it is better for you that nothing of this kind happen while you are here. Mahomet Abou Kalec is daily expected, and all these things will be put upon another footing. In the mean time keep at home as much as possible, and never go out without two or three black people along with you, servants, or others. While you are in my brother's house, as you now are, and we alive, there is nobody dares molest you; and you are perfectly at liberty to refuse or admit any person you please, whether they come from the king or not, by only saying Adelan forbids you. I will answer for the rest. The less you come here the better; and never venture into the street at night."

At this instant a message from the king called him in. I went away better satisfied than before, because I now had learned there was a place in that town where I could remain in safety; and I was resolved there to await the arrival of Abou Kalec, to whom I looked up as to the means Providence was to use to free me from the designs the king was apparently meditating against me. I was more confirmed in the belief of these bad intentions, by a conversation he had with Hagi Belal, to whom he said, That he was very credibly informed I had along with me above 2000 ounces of gold, besides a quantity of silver, and rich embroideries from India, from which last place, and not from Cairo, I was come as a merchant, and not a physician. I resolved, therefore, to keep close at home, and to put into some form the observations that I had made upon this extraordinary government; a monarchy that had started up, as it were in our days, and of which no traveller has as yet given the smallest account.

CHAP. IX.

Conversations with Achmet—History and Government of Sennaar—Heat—Diseases—Trade of that country—The Author's distressed Situation—Leaves Sennaar.

FROM Salidan's time, till the conquest of Selim, emperor of the Turks, who finished the reign of the Mamalukes by the murder of Tomum Bey, that is, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, the Arabs in Nubia and Beja, and the several countries above Egypt, had been incorporated with the old indigenous inhabitants of those territories, which were the Shepherds, and, upon conversion of these last to the Mahometan religion, had become one people with those Saracens who over-ran this country in the Khalifat of Omar. The only distinction that remained was, that the Arabs continued their old manner of life in tents, while the indigenous inhabitants lived in huts, mostly by the sides of rivers, and among plantations of date-trees.

It must be, however, remembered, that this, though a pretty general observation, does not hold without exception; for the Arabs of Mahomet's own family, the Beni Koreish, mostly lived in towns, such as Mecca, Tayef, and Medina, especially after the expulsion of the Jews, and the establishment of his empire.

Many also of these, who came over to Beja and the eastern part of Nubia, continued their practice of living in small towns or villages, and were distinguished by the name of Jaheleen. This appellation, literally interpreted, signifies Pagans; but by extension, the ancient races of Arabs converted immediately from Paganism to the Mahometan faith, by Mahomet himself, without having ever embraced Christianity, or any other Pagan superstition besides pure Sabaism, and this was the old religion of Arabia, and of the whole peninsula of Africa to the Western Ocean. These Jaheleen are generally known by their name, referring to men of consideration in the time of Mahomet's life, whom they call their father, or to some circumstance relating to Mahomet himself. An example of the first of the race is, Rabatab, that is, Rabat was our father, or, "we are the children of Rabat." An example of the second is the Macabrab, or, the sepulchre is our father, meaning the sepulchre of their prophet at Medina.

These Jaheleen are, as I have said, truly noble Arabs of the race of Beni Koreish. Though they live in villages, they are the most dangerous and most fanatic wretches a traveller can meet. All this country, though nominally subject to Egypt for the sake of trade, had their own prince of the race Beni Koreish, whose title was Welled Ageeb, Son of the Good, which was his general inauguration name; and, besides this, he was called Ali, or Mahomet Welled Ageeb, which is part of his title, or, as it were, his Christian name added to that of his family. This prince was nevertheless, but the Shekh of all the Arabs, to whom they paid a tribute to enable him to maintain his dignity, and a sufficient strength to keep up order, and enforce his decrees in public matters. As for

economical ones, each tribe was under the government of its own Shekh, old men, fathers of families in each clan.

The residence of this Arab prince, called for shortness Wed Ageeb, was at Gerri, a town in the very limits of the tropical rains, immediately upon the ferry, which leads across the Nile to the desert of Bahiouda, and the road to Dongola and Egypt, joining the great desert of Selima. This was a very well-chosen situation; it being a toll-gate, as it were, to catch all the Arabs that had flocks, who, living within the rains in the country which was all of fat earth, were every year, about the month of May, obliged by the fly to pass, as it were, in review, to take up their abode in the sandy desert without the tropical rains. By the time fair weather returned in the fertile parts of the country to the southward, and freed them from the fly, all sorts of verdure had grown up in great luxuriancy, while hunger stared them now in the face among the sands to the northward, where every thing eatable had been consumed by the multitudess of cattle that had taken refuge there. The Arab chief, with a large army of light unincumbered horse, stood in the way of their return to their pastures, till they had paid the uttermost farthing of tribute, including arrears, if any there were. Such was the state and government of the whole of this vast country, from the frontiers of Egypt to those of Abyssinia, at the beginning of the 16th century.

In the year 1504, a black nation, hitherto unknown, inhabiting the western banks of the Bahar el Abiad, in about latitude 13°, made a descent, in a multitude of canoes, or boats, upon the Arab provinces, and in a battle near Herbagi, they defeated Wed Ageeb, and forced him to a capitulation, by which the Arabs were to pay their conquerors, in the beginning, one half of

their stock, and every subsequent year one half of the increase, which was to be levied at the time of their passing into the sands to avoid the fly. Upon this condition, the Arabs were to enjoy their former possessions unmolested, and Wed Ageeb his place and dignity, that he always might be ready to use coercion in favour of the conquerors, in case any of the distant Arabs refused payment; and he thus became as it were their lieutenant.

This race of negroes is, in their own country, called Shillook *. They founded Sennaar, less advantageously situated than Gerri, and removed the seat of government of Wed Ageeb to Herbagi, that he might be more immediately under their own eye. It was the year 1504 of the Christian æra, that Amru, son of Adelan, the first of their sovereigns on the eastern side of the Nile, founded this monarchy, and built Sennaar, which hath ever since been the capital. From this period, till the time when I was at Sennaar, 266 years had elapsed, in which 20 kings had reigned; that is, from Amru the First, to Ismain, the present king. He was about 34 years of age, and had reigned three years; so that, notwithstanding the long reigns of Amru, and Rebat the First, and the two Baadys, the duration of the reigns of the kings of Sennaar will be but 13 years upon an average; eight of the twenty have been deposed, and Ismain, the present king, stands the fairest chance possible of being very soon the 9th of that number.

At the establishing of this monarchy, the king, and the whole nation of Shillook, were Pagans. They were soon after converted to Mahometism, for the sake of trading with Cairo, and took the name of Funge,

* The town, called Shillook, is on the east side of the Bahar-el-abiad, 3½ days journey from Sennaar.—BROWNE's *Travels*, p. 453.—E.

which they interpret sometimes lords, or conquerors, and, at other times, free citizens. All that can be said with certainty of this term, as there is no access to the study of their language, is, that it is applicable to those only that have been born east of the Bahar el Abiad. It does not seem to me that they should pride themselves in being free citizens, because the first title of nobility in this country is that of slave; indeed there is no other. Upon any appearance of your undervaluing a man at Sennaar, he instantly asks you if you know who he is? if you don't know that he is a slave? in the same idea of aristocratical arrogance, as would be said in England upon an altercation, do you know to whom you are speaking? do you know that I am a peer? All titles and dignities are undervalued, and precarious, unless they are in the hands of one who is a slave. Slavery in Sennaar is the only true nobility.

As I do not know that the names of these sovereigns are to be found anywhere else, I have set them down here. The record from which I drew them is at least as extraordinary as any part of their history; it was the hangman's roll, or register. It is one of the singularities which obtains among this brutish people, that the king ascends his throne under an admission, that he may be lawfully put to death by his own subjects or slaves, upon a council being held by the great officers, if they decree that it is not for the advantage of the state that he be suffered to reign any longer. There is one officer of his own family, who alone can be the instrument of shedding his sovereign and kinsman's blood. This officer is called Sid el Coom, master of the king's household, or servants, but has no vote in deposing him; nor is any guilt imputed to him, however many of his sovereigns he thus regularly murders. Achmet Sid el Coom, the present licensed regicide, and resident in Ismain's palace, had

murdered the late king Nasser, and two of his sons that were well grown, besides a child at his mother's breast; and he was expecting every day to confer the same favour upon Ismain; though at present there was no malice on the one part, nor jealousy on the other; and I believe both of them had a guess of what was likely to happen. It was this Achmet, who was very much my friend, that gave me a list of the kings that had reigned, how long their reign lasted, and whether they died a natural death, or were deposed and murdered *.

This extraordinary officer was one of the very few that shewed me any attention or civility at Sennaar. He had been violently tormented with the gravel, but had found much ease from the use of soap-pills that I had given him; and this had produced, on his part, no small degree of gratitude and friendship: he was also subject to the epilepsy; but this he was persuaded was witchcraft, from the machinations of an enemy who resided far off. I often staid at his house all night, when he suffered excessive pains, and I may say then only I was in safety.

Achmet seemed, by strange accident, to be one of the gentlest spirits of any that it was my misfortune to converse with at Sennaar. He was very little attached to, or convinced of the truth of, the Mahometan religion, and as little zealous or instructed in his own. He used often to qualify his ignorance, or disbelief, by saying, that any, or no religion, was better than that of a Christian. His place of birth was in a village of Fazuclo, and it appeared to me that he was still a Pagan. He was constantly attended by Nuban priests, powerful conjurors and sorcerers, if you believed him. I often conversed with these in great freedom, when it happened they understood Arabic, and

* In an Arabic MS. in Mr Bruce's Museum at Kinnaird.—E.

from them I learned many particulars concerning the situation of the inland part of the country, especially that vast ridge of mountains, Dyre and Tegla, which run into the heart of Africa to the westward, whence they say anciently they came, after having been preserved there from a deluge. I asked them often (powerful as they were in charms), "Why they did not cure Achmet of the gravel, or epilepsy?" Their answer was, "That it was a Christian devil, and not subject to their power *."

Achmet did not believe that I was a Christian, knew I was no Mahometan, but thought I was like himself, something between the two, nor did I ever undeceive him. I was no missionary, nor had I any care of souls, nor desire to enter into conversation about religion with a man whose only office was to be the deliberate murderer of his sovereign. He spoke good Arabic, was offended at no question, but answered freely, and without reserve, whether about the country, religion, or government, or the post which he enjoyed, if we can term it *enjoying* an office, created for such horrid crimes. He told me, with great coolness, in answer to a question why he murdered Nasser's son in his father's presence, that he did not dare to do otherwise from duty to Nasser, whose right it was to see his son slain in a regular and lawful manner, and this was by cutting his throat with a sword, and not by a more ignominious and painful death, which, if it had not been done in the father's sight, the vengeance of his enemies might have suggested and inflicted. He said, that Nasser was very little concerned at the spectacle of his son's death, but very loath

* Deir and Tuggala are two places on the West side of the Bahar-el-abiad, separate from one another, a days journey, and subject to the king of the Tuclawi. Deir is 2½ days journey south of the Shillook.—Vid. BROWNE's *Travels*, p. 463.—E.

when it came to his turn to die himself; that he urged him often to suffer him to escape, but, finding this in vain, he submitted without resistance. He told me, Ismain, the present king, stood upon very precarious ground; that both the brothers, Adelan and Abou Kalec, were at the head of armies in the field; that Kittou had at his disposal all the forces that were in Sennaar; and that the king was little esteemed, and had neither experience, courage, friends, money, nor troops.

I asked him if he was not afraid, when he entered into the king's presence, lest he, too, might take it into his head to shew him, that to die or be slain was not so slight a matter as he made of it. He said, "By no means; that it was his duty to be with the king the greatest part of the morning, and necessarily once very late in the evening; that the king knew he had no hand in the wrong that might be done to him, nor any way advanced his death; but, being come to the point that he must die, the rest was only a matter of decency, and it would undoubtedly be the object of his choice rather to be slain by the hands of his own relation in private, than those of a hired assassin, an Arab, or a Christian slave, in public view before the populace. When Baady, the king's father, was taken prisoner, and sent to Teawa to Welled Hassan, governor of Atbara (Shekh Fidele's father), Adelan ordered him to be put to death there, and Welled Hassan carried that order into execution. The king being always armed, was stout, and seemed to be upon his guard; and Welled Hassan found no way of killing him but by thrusting him through the back with a lance, while washing his hands. The people murmured against Adelan exceedingly, not on account of the murder itself, but the manner of it; and Welled Hassan was afterwards put to death himself, though he acted by express orders, because, not being the officer

appointed, he had killed the king, and next, because he had done it with a lance, whereas the only lawful instrument was a sword."

I have already said, that was the year of the Hegira, answering to 1504 of the Christian æra; that this people, called Shillook, built the town of Sennaar, and established their monarchy, which has now subsisted under a succession of twenty kings of the same family.

LIST OF THE KINGS OF SENNAAR.

	Years reigned.	A. D.
Amru, son of Adelan, began his reign in the year 1504, and reigned	30	1534
Neil, his son,	17	1551
Abdelcader, son of Amru,	8	1559
Amru, son of Neil, deposed,	11	1570
Dekin, son of Neil,	17	1587
Douro, his son, deposed,	3	1590
Tiby, son of Abdelcader,	3	1593
Ounsa, deposed,	13	1606
Abdelcader, son of Ounsa, deposed,	4	1610
Adelan, son of Ounsa, deposed,	5	1615
Baady, son of Abdelcader,	6	1621
Rebat, son of Baady,	30	1651
Baady, his son,	38	1689
Ounsa, son of Nasser, son of Rebat,	12	1701
Baady el Achmer, his son,	25	1726
Ounsa, his son, deposed,	3	1729
L'Oul, son of Baady,	4	1733
Baady, his son, deposed,	33	1766
Nasser, his son, deposed,	3	1769
Ismain,	3	1772

Although these kings began with a very remarkable conquest, it does not appear that they added much to their kingdom afterwards. Ounsa, son of Nasser, is said to have first subdued the province of Fazuclo. I shall make but three observations upon this list, which is undoubtedly authentic. The first is, that this monarchy having been established in the year 1504, it must answer to the 9th year of the reign of Naod in the Abyssinian annals, as that prince began to reign in 1495.—The second is, that Tecla Haimanout, the son of Yasous the Great, writing to Baady el Achmer, or the White, who was the son of Ounsa, about the murder of M. du Roule, the French ambassador, in the beginning of this century, speaks of the ancient friendship that had subsisted between the kings of Abyssinia and those of Sennaar, ever since the reign of Kim, whom he mentions as one of Baady's remote predecessors on the throne of Sennaar. Now, in the whole list of kings we have just given, we do not find one of the name of Kim; nor is there one word mentioned of a king of Sennaar, or a treaty with him, in the whole annals of Abyssinia, till the beginning of Socinios's reign. I therefore imagine that the Kim *, whom Tecla Haimanout informs us his predecessors corresponded with in ancient times, was a prince, who, under the command of the Caliph of Cairowan, in the kingdom of Tunis in Africa, took Cairo and fortified it, by surrounding it with a strong wall, and who reigned, by himself and successors, 100 years, from 998 to 1101, when Hadec, the last prince of that race, was slain by Salidan, first Soldan of Egypt, with which country the Abyssinians at that time were in constant correspondence, though I never heard they were with Sennaar, which indeed did not exist at that

* Vide Marmol. tom. i. p. 274.

time, nor was there either city or kingdom till the reign of Naod; so it was a correspondence with the sovereigns of Cairo, Tecla Haimanout mistook for that with Sennaar, which monarchy was not then founded.—The third observation is, that this Baady el Achmer, being the very king who murdered M. du Roule in 1704, did, nevertheless, live till the year 1726, having reigned 25 years; whereas M. de Maillet * writes to his court, that this prince had been defeated and slain in a battle he had with the Arabs, under their Shekh at Herbagi, in 1705.

Upon the death of a king of Sennaar, his eldest son succeeds by right; and immediately afterwards, as many of the brothers of the reigning prince as can be apprehended are put to death by the Sid el Coom, in the manner already described. Achmet, one of the sons of Baady, brother of Nasser, and Ismain, now on the throne, fled, upon his brother's accession, to the frontiers of Kuara, and gathering together about a hundred of the Ganjar horse, he came to Gondar, and was kindly received by the Iteghe, who persuaded him to be baptized. Some time after he returned to Kuara, and joined the king's army a little before the battle of Serbraxos, with about the same number of horse; and there he misbehaved, taking flight upon the first appearance of the enemy, before a man was killed or wounded on either side. He was graceful in his person and carriage, but a liar and drunkard beyond all conception.

The practice which obtains at Sennaar of murdering all the collaterals of the royal family, seems to be but a part of the same idea † which prevails in Abys-

* Vid. Consul Maillet's letter to the French ambassador, published by Le Grande in his History of Abyssinia.

† Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne.—POPE.

sinia, of confining the princes all their lives upon a mountain. The difference of treatment, in cases perfectly parallel, seems to offer a just manner of judging, how much the one people surpasses the other in barbarity of manners and disposition. In Abyssinia, the princes are confined for life on a mountain, and in Sennaar they are murdered in their father's sight, in the palace where they were born.

As in Abyssinia, so neither in Sennaar do women succeed to sovereignty. No historical reason is given for this exclusion. It probably was a rule brought from El-aice*, their own country, before founding their monarchy; for the very contrary prevailed among the Shepherds, whom they subdued in Atbara. The princesses, however, in Abyssinia, are upon a much better footing than those of Sennaar. These last have no state nor settled income, and are regarded very little more than the daughters of private individuals. Among that crowd of women which I saw the two nights I was in the palace, there were many princesses, sisters of the king, as I was after told. At that time they were not distinguishable by their manners, nor was any particular mark of respect shown them.

The royal family were originally Negroes, and remain so still, when their mothers have been black like themselves; but when the king has happened to marry an Arab woman, as he often does, the black colour of the father cedes to the white of the mother, and the child is white. Such was the case of Baady, therefore named Achmer; his father Rebat was black, but marrying an Arab, his son who succeeded him was white. The last Baady, who was slain at Teawa, was a perfect Negro; and by a slave

* This is the district, or rather the town, opposite to Shilook, on the Bahar-el-abiad, called, by Mr Browne, Hellet *Allais*.—E.

from his own country he had the late king Nasser, who, like his father, was a perfect black. By an Arab of the tribe of Daveina he had Ismain, the present king, who is white *; and so it has invariably happened in the royal family, as well as in private ones. But what is still more extraordinary, though equally true, an Arab who is white, marrying a black woman slave, has infallibly white children. I will not say that this is so universal as that an example of the contrary may not be found, but all the instances I happened to see confirmed this. The Arabs, from choice, cohabit only with Negro women in the hot months of summer, on account of the remarkable coolness of their skins, in which they are said to differ from the Arab women; but I never saw one black Arab in the kingdom of Sennaar, notwithstanding the generality of this intercourse.

There is a constant mortality among the children in and about this metropolis, insomuch that, in all appearance, the people would be extinct were they not supplied by a number of slaves brought from all the different countries to the southward. The men, however, are strong, and remarkable for size, but short-lived; owing, probably, to their indulging themselves in every sort of excess from their very infancy. This being the case, this climate must have undergone a strange revolution; as Sennaar is but a small distance from where the ancients place the Macrobii, a nation so called from the remarkable length of their lives.—But, perhaps, these were mountaineers, from the frontiers of Kuara, being described as having gold in their territory, and are the race now called Guba. It is very remarkable, that, though they are Mahometans, they are so brutal, not to say indelicate, with regard

* Or rather red, as Achmer signifies; it is what we call copper-coloured.—E.

to their women, as to sell their slaves after having lived with, and even had children by them. The king himself, it is said, is often guilty of this unnatural practice, utterly unknown in any other Mahometan country.

Once in his reign the king is obliged, with his own hand, to plow and sow a piece of land. From this operation he is called Baady, the countryman, or peasant; it is a name common to the whole race of kings, as Cæsar was among the Roman emperors, though they have generally another name peculiar to each person, and this, not attended to, has occasioned confusion in the narrative given by strangers, writing concerning them.

No horse, mule, ass, or any beast of burden, will breed, or even live at Sennaar, or many miles around it. Poultry does not live there. Neither dog nor cat, sheep nor bullock, can be preserved a season there. They must go all, every half year, to the sands.—Though all possible care be taken of them, they die in every place where the fat earth is about the town during the first season of the rains. Two grey-hounds, which I brought from Atbara, and the mules which I brought from Abyssinia, lived only a few weeks after I arrived. They seemed to have some inward complaint, for nothing appeared outwardly. The dogs had abundance of water, but I killed one of them from apprehension of madness. Several kings have tried to keep lions, but no care could prolong their lives beyond the first rains. Shekh Adelan had two, which were in great health, being kept with his horses at grass in the sands but three miles from Sennaar. Neither rose nor any species of jessamin grow here; no tree but the lemon flowers near the city, that ever I saw; the rose has been often tried, but in vain.

Sennaar is in lat. 13° 34′ 36″ north, and in long. 33° 30′ 30″ east from the meridian of Greenwich. It

is on the west side of the Nile, and close upon the banks of it. The ground whereon it stands rises just enough to prevent the river from entering the town, even in the height of the inundation, when it comes to be even with the street. Poncet says, that when he was at this city, his companion, father Brevedent, a Jesuit, an able mathematician, on the 21st of March, 1699, determined the latitude of Sennaar to be 13° 4′ N. the difference, therefore, will be about half a degree. The reader, however, may implicitly rely upon the situation I have given it, being the mean result of above fifty observations, made both night and day, on the most favourable occasions, by a quadrant of three feet radius, and telescopes of two, and sometimes of three feet focal length, both reflectors and refractors made by the best masters.

The town of Sennaar is very populous, there being in it many good houses after the fashion of the country. Poncet says, in his time, they were all of one storey high; but now the great officers have all houses of two. They have parapet roofs, which is a singular construction; for, in other places, within the rains, the roofs are all conical. The houses are all built of clay, with very little straw mixed with it, which sufficiently shews the rains here must be less violent than to the southward, probably from the distance of the mountains. However, when I was there, a week of constant rain happened, and on the 30th of July the Nile increased violently, after loud thunder, and a great darkness to the south. The whole stream was covered with wreck of houses, canes, wooden bowls and platters, living camels and cattle, and several dead ones passed Sennaar, hurried along by the current with great velocity. A hyæna, endeavouring to cross before the town, was surrounded and killed by the inhabitants. The water got into the houses that stand up-

on its banks, and, by rising several feet high, the walls melted, being clay, which occasioned several of them to fall. It seemed, by the floating wreck of houses that appeared in the stream, to have destroyed a great many villages to the southward towards Fazuclo.

The soil of Sennaar, as I have already said, is very unfavourable both to man and beast, and particularly adverse to their propagation. This seems to me to be owing to some noxious quality of the fat earth with which it is every way surrounded, and nothing may be depended upon more surely than the fact already mentioned, that no mare, or she-beast of burden, ever foaled in the town, or in any village within several miles round it. This remarkable quality ceases upon removing from the fertile country to the sands. Aira, between three and four miles from Sennaar, with no water near it but the Nile, surrounded with white barren sand, agrees perfectly with all animals; and here are the quarters where I saw Shekh Adelan, the minister's horse (as I suppose, for their numbers), by far the finest in the world, where in safety he watched the motions of his sovereign, who, shut up in his capital of Sennaar, could not there maintain one horse to oppose him.

But however unfavourable this soil may be for the propagation of animals, it contributes very abundantly both to the nourishment of man and beast. It is positively said to render three hundred for one, which, however confidently advanced, is, I think, both from reason and appearance, a great exaggeration. It is all sown with dora, or millet, the principal food of the natives. It produces also wheat and rice, but these at Sennaar are sold by the pound, even in years of plenty. The salt made use of at Sennaar is all extracted from the earth about it, especially at Halfaia, so strongly is the soil impregnated with this useful fossil.

About twelve miles from Sennaar, nearly to the N. W., is a collection of villages, called Shaddly, from a great saint, who, in his time, directed large pits to be dug, and plastered closely within with clay, into which a quantity of grain was put when it was at the cheapest, and these were covered up, and plastered again at the top, which they call sealing, and the hole itself matamore. These matamores are in great number all over the plain, and on any prospect of corn growing dearer, they are opened, and corn sold at a low price both to the town and country.

To the north of Shaddly, about twenty-four miles, is another foundation of this sort, called Wed Aboud, still greater than Shaddly. Upon these two charities the chief subsistence of the Arabs depends; for, as there is continual war among these people, and their violence being always directed against the crops rather than the persons of their enemies, the destruction of each tribe would follow the loss of its harvest, were it not for the extraordinary supplies furnished at such times by these granaries.

The small villages of soldiers are scattered up and down through this immense plain, to watch the grain that is sown, which is dora only, and it is said that here the ground will produce no other grain. Prodigious excavations are made at proper distances, which fill with water in the rainy season, and are a great relief to the Arabs in their passage between the cultivated country and the sands. The fly, that inexorable persecutor of the cattle, never pursues them to the north of Shaddly. The knowledge of this circumstance was what, perhaps, determined the first builders of Sennaar to place their capital here; this, too, probably, induced the two saints, Shaddly and Wed Aboud, to make here these vast excavations for corn and water. This is the first resting-place the Arabs find, where,

having all things necessary for subsistence, they can at leisure transact their affairs with government.

To the westward of Shaddly and Aboud, as far as the river Abiad, or El-aice, the country is full of trees, which makes it a favourite station for camels*. As Shaddly is not above three hours ride on horseback from Sennaar, there could not be chosen a situation more convenient for levying the tribute; for, though Gerri, from the favourable situation of the ground, being mountainous and rocky, and just on the extremity of the rains, was a place properly chosen for this purpose by the Arab prince before the conquest of the Funge (for his troops there cut them off, either from the sands, or the fertile country, as he pleased), yet many of them might have remained behind at Shaddly, and to the westward, free from the terror of the fly, and consequently without any necessity of advancing so far north as Gerri, and there subjecting themselves to contribution.

In this extensive plain, near Shaddly, arise two mountainous districts; the one called Jibbel Moia, or the Mountain of Water, which is a ridge of considerable hills nearly of the same height, closely united; and the other Jibbel Segud, or the Cold Mountain, a broken ridge, composed of parts, some high and some low, without any regular form. Both these enjoy a fine climate, and are full of inhabitants, but of no considerable extent. They serve for a protection to the Daheera, or farms of Shaddly and Wed Aboud.—They are also fortresses in the way of the Arabs, to detain and force them to payment in their flight from the cultivated country and rains, to the dry lands of Atbara. Each of these districts is governed by the descendant of their ancient and native princes, who

* The White River is called the Bahar el Aice, or river of Allais.—E.

long resisted all the power of the Arabs, having both horse and foot. They continued to be Pagans till the conquest of the Funge. Bloody and unnatural sacrifices were said to have been in use in these mountainous states, with horrid circumstances of cruelty, till Abd-el-cader, son of Amru, the third of the kings of Sennaar, about the year 1554, besieged first the one and then the other of these princes in their mountain, and forced them to surrender; and, having fastened a chain of gold to each of their ears, he exposed them in the public market-place at Sennaar in that situation, and sold them to the highest bidder, at the vile price of something like a farthing each. After this degradation, being circumcised, and converted to the Mahometan religion, they were restored each to their government, as slaves of Sennaar, upon very easy conditions of tribute, and have been faithful ever since.

Nothing is more pleasant than the country around Sennaar, in the end of August and beginning of September, I mean so far as the eye is concerned; instead of that barren, bare waste, which it appeared on our arrival in May, the corn now sprung up, and covering the ground, made the whole of this immense plain appear a level, green land, interspersed with great lakes of water, and ornamented at certain intervals with groups of villages, the conical tops of the houses presenting, at a distance, the appearance of small encampments. Through this immense, extensive plain, winds the Nile, a delightful river there, above a mile broad, full to the very brim, but never overflowing. Every where on these banks are seen numerous herds of the most beautiful cattle of various kinds, the tribute recently extorted from the Arabs, who, freed from all their vexations, return home with the remainder of their flocks in peace, at as great a

distance from the town, country, and their oppressors, as they possibly can.

The banks of the Nile about Sennaar resemble the pleasantest parts of Holland in the summer season; but soon after, when the rains cease, and the sun exerts his utmost influence, the dora begins to ripen, the leaves to turn yellow and to rot, the lakes to putrefy, smell, and be full of vermin, all this beauty suddenly disappears; bare scorched Nubia returns, and all its terrors of poisonous winds and moving sands, glowing and ventilated with sultry blasts, which are followed by a troop of terrible attendants, epilepsies, apoplexies, violent fevers, obstinate agues, and lingering painful dysenteries, still more obstinate and mortal.

War and treason seem to be the only employment of this horrid people, whom Heaven has separated, by almost impassable deserts, from the rest of mankind; confining them to an accursed spot, seemingly to give them earnest, in time, of the only other worse, which he has reserved to them for an eternal hereafter.

The dress of Sennaar is very simple. It consists of a long shirt of blue Surat cloth, called Marowty, which covers them from the lower part of the neck down to their feet but does not conceal the neck itself; and this is the only difference between the men's and the women's dress; that of the women covers their neck altogether, being buttoned like ours. The men have sometimes a sash tied about their middle; and both men and women go barefooted in the house, even those of the better sort of people. Their floors are covered with Persian carpets, especially the women's apartments. In fair weather, they wear sandals; and without doors they use a kind of wooden patten, very neatly ornamented with shells. In the greatest heat at noon, they order buckets of water to be thrown upon them instead of bathing. Both men

and women anoint themselves, at least once a day, with camels grease mixed with civet, which they imagine softens their skin, and preserves them from cutaneous eruptions, of which they are so fearful, that the smallest pimple in any visible part of their body keeps them in the house till it disappears: For the same reason, though they have a clean shirt every day, they use one dipt in grease to lie in all night, as they have no covering but this, and lie upon a bull's hide, tanned, and very much softened by this constant greasing, and, at the same time, very cool, though it occasions a smell that no washing can free them from.

The principal diet of the poorer sort is millet, made into bread or flour. The rich make a pudding of this, toasting the flour before the fire, and pouring milk and butter into it; besides which, they eat beef, partly roasted and partly raw. Their horned cattle are the largest and fattest in the world, and are exceedingly fine; but the common meat sold in the market is camel's flesh. The liver of the animal, and the spare rib, are always eaten raw through the whole country. I never saw one instance where it was dressed with fire: it is not then true that eating raw flesh is peculiar to Abyssinia; it is practised, in this instance of camel's flesh, in all the black countries to the westward.

Hog's flesh is not sold in the market; but all the people of Sennaar eat it publicly; men in office, who pretend to be Mahometans, eat theirs in secret. The Mahometan religion made a very remarkable progress among the Jews and Christians on the Arabian, or eastern side of the Red Sea, and soon after also in Egypt; but it was either received coolly, or not at all, by the Pagans on the west side, unless when, after a

signal victory, it was strongly enforced by the sword of the conqueror.

The Saracens, who over-ran this country, were bigots in their religion, as their posterity continue to be at this day. They have preserved the language of the Koran in its ancient purity, and adhere rigidly to the letter of its precepts. They either extirpated the Pagans, or converted them; but this power and tyranny of the Saracens received a check, both in Egypt and Arabia, about the 16th century, by Selim, who established Turkish garrisons in all their principal places on the frontiers of Beja, or Barbaria, and in the Ber el Ajam, or ancient Azamia, along the west coast of the Red Sea.

These Turks were all truly atheists in their hearts, who despised the zeal of the Arabs, and oppressed them so, that Paganism again ventured to shew its head. The Shillook, as I have said before, made an eruption into Beja, and conquered the whole of that country. They became masters of the Arabs, and embraced their religion as a form, but never anxiously followed the law of Mahomet, which did not hold out to them that liberty and relaxation by which it had tempted the Jews and Christians. These the law of Mahomet had freed from many restraints upon pleasures and pursuits forbidden by the Gospel, and thus made their yoke easier. But it was not so with the Pagan nations. The Mahometan religion diminished their natural liberty, by imposing prayers, ablutions, alms, circumcision, and such-like, to which before they were under no obligation. The Pagans therefore of Sennaar, and all the little states to the westward, Dar Fowr, Dar-Sele, Bagirma, Bornou, and Tombucto, and all that country upon the Niger, called Sudan, trouble themselves very little with the detail of the Mahometan religion, which they embraced merely for the sake of personal freedom and

advantages in trade; but they are Pagans in their hearts and in their practices, Mahometans in their conversation only. As for the sons of these, they are Pagans like their fathers, unless some Fakir, or Arab saint, takes pains to instruct and teach them to read; otherwise the whole of their religion consists in the confession of faith, "La Illah el Ullah, Mahomet Rasoul Ullah,"—"There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet *."

There are three principal governments in the kingdom of Sennaar. The first is at El-aice, the capital of that country, from which the Shillook come. The Bahar el Abiad spreads itself all over the territory; and, divided into a quantity of small channels (whether by art or nature I know not), surrounds a number of little islands, upon each of which is a village, and this collection of villages is called the town of El-aice. The inhabitants are all fishermen, and have a number of boats, like canoes, in which they sail up and down to the cataracts. With incredible fleets of these their invasion was made when they undertook the conquest of the Arabs, who had not the smallest warning of the attempt. They had, at that time, no weapons of iron: their swords and lances were of a hard wood called Dengui-Sibber. It must be a relation of the Mek of Sennaar that commands at El-aice; and he is never suffered to leave that post, or come to Sennaar.

The second government, next to this in importance, is Kordofan. The revenue consists chiefly in slaves procured from Dyre and Tegla. It seems this situation is the most convenient for invading those mountains, either from its having water in the way, or from some other circumstance that is not known. Maho-

* This is the fact with respect to native blacks: all the Arab race are most intolerant bigots.—F.

met Abou Kalec had this government, and with him about 1000 black horse, armed with coats of mail, with whom he maintained himself at this time independent of the king. It is a frontier nearest to Dar-Fowr, a black state still more barbarous, if possible, than Sennaar, and by them it often has been taken from Sennaar, and again retaken.

The third government is Fazuclo, bounded by the river El-aice on the west, and the Nile on the east, and the mountains of Fazuclo, where are the great cataracts on the south. These are part of the large chain of mountains of Dyre and Tegla, which reach so far westward into the continent, from whence comes the chief supply both of gold and slaves, which constitutes the riches of this country; for the greatest part of the revenue of Fazuclo is gold; and the person that commands it is not a Funge, but the same native prince from whom the army of Sennaar conquered it. This seems to be a very remarkable piece of policy in this barbarous nation, which must have succeeded, as they constantly adhere to it, of making the prince of the state they have conquered their lieutenant in the government of his own country afterwards. Such was the case with Dongola, whose Mek they continue; also with Wed Ageeb, prince of the Arabs, whom they subdued; and such was the case with Fazuclo, Wed Aboud, Jibbel Moia, and other petty states, all of which they conquered, but did not change their prince.

The forces at Sennaar, immediately around the capital, consist of about 14,000 Nuba, who fight naked, having no other armour but a short javelin and a round shield, very bad troops, as I suppose; about 1800 horse, all black, mounted by black slaves, armed with coats of mail, and without any other weapon but a broad Sclavonian sword. These I suppose, by

the weight and power of man and horse, would bear down, or break through double the number of any other troops in the world: nobody, that has not seen this cavalry, can have any idea to what perfection the horse rises here. The Mek has not one musket in his whole army. Besides these horse, there is a great, but uncertain number of Arabs, who pay their tribute immediately to the Mek and to the great men in government, and live under their protection close by the town, and thereby have the advantage of trading with it, of supplying it with provisions, and, no doubt, must contribute in part to its strength and defence in time of need.

After what I have said of the latitude of Sennaar, it will scarcely be necessary to repeat, that the heats are excessive. The thermometer rises in the shade to 119°, but as I have observed of the heats of Arabia, so now I do in respect to those of Sennaar; the degrees of the thermometer do not convey any idea of the effect the sun has upon the sensations of the body or the colour of the skin. Nations of blacks live within lat. 13° and 14°, when 10° south of them, nearly under the Line, all the people are white, as we had an opportunity of seeing daily in the Galla, whom we have described. Sennaar, which is in lat. 13°, *is* hotter, by the thermometer, 50 degrees, when *the* sun is most distant from it, than Gondar is, though a degree farther south, when the sun is vertical.

Cold and hot are terms merely relative, not determined by the latitude, but elevation of the place; when, therefore, we say hot, some other explanation is necessary concerning the place where we are, in order to give an adequate idea of the sensations of that heat upon the body, and the effects of it upon the lungs. The degree of the thermometer conveys this very imperfectly; 90° is excessively hot at Lo-

heia in Arabia Felix, and yet the latitude of Loheia is but 15°, whereas 90° at Sennaar is, as to sense, only warm, although Sennaar, as we have said, is in lat. 13°.

At Sennaar, then, I call it *cold*, when one, fully clothed and at rest, feels himself in want of fire. I call it *cool*, when one, fully clothed and at rest, feels he could bear more covering all over, or in part, more than he has then on. I call it *temperate*, when a man, so clothed and at rest, feels no such want, and can take moderate exercise, such as walking about a room without sweating. I call it *warm*, when a man, so clothed, does not sweat when at rest, but, upon moderate motion, sweats, and again cools. I call it *hot*, when a man sweats at rest, and excessively on moderate motion. I call it *very hot*, when a man, with thin or little clothing, sweats much, though at rest. I call it *excessive hot*, when a man, in his shirt, at rest, sweats excessively, when all motion is painful, and the knees feel feeble as if after a fever. I call it *extreme hot*, when the strength fails, a disposition to faint comes on, a straitness is found in the temples, as if a small cord was drawn tight around the head, the voice impaired, the skin dry, and the head seems more than ordinary large and light. This, I apprehend, denotes death at hand, as we have seen in the instance of Imhanzara, in our journey to Teawa; but this is rarely or never effected by the sun alone, without the addition of that poisonous wind, which pursued us through Atbara, and will be more particularly described in our journey down the desert, to which Heaven, in pity to mankind, has confined it, and where it has, no doubt, contributed to the total extinction of every thing that hath the breath of life. A thermometer graduated

upon this scale would exhibit a figure very different from the common one; for I am convinced, by experiment, that a web of the finest muslin, wrapt round the body at Sennaar, will occasion at mid-day a greater sensation of heat in the body than the rise of 5° in the thermometer of Fahrenheit.

At Sennaar, from 70° to 78° in Fahrenheit's thermometer is cool; from 79° to 92° temperate; at 92° begins warm. Although the degree of the thermometer marks a greater heat than is felt by the body of us strangers, it seems to me that the sensations of the natives bear still a less proportion to that degree than ours. On the 2d of August, while I was lying perfectly enervated on a carpet, in a room deluged with water, at twelve o'clock, the thermometer at 116°, I saw several black labourers pulling down a house, working with great vigour, without any symptoms of being at all incommoded.

The diseases of Sennaar, are the dysentery, or bloody flux, fatal in proportion as it begins with the first of the rains, or the end of them, and return of the fair weather. Intermitting fevers accompany this complaint very frequently, which often ends in them. Bark is a sovereign remedy in this country; and seems to be by so much the surer, that it purges on taking the first dose, and this it does almost without exception. Epilepsies and scirrhous livers are likewise very frequent, owing, as is supposed, to their defeating or diminishing perspiration, or stopping the pores by constant unction, as also by the quantity of water they deluge themselves with at the time they are hottest. The influence of the moon in epilepsies, and the certainty with which the third day after the conjunction brings back the paroxysm in regular intermitting fevers, is what naturally surprises people not

deeper read than I am in the study of medicine. Those who live much in camps, or in the parts of Atbara far from rivers, have certainly, more or less, the gravel, occasioned, probably, by the use of well-water; for at Sennaar, where they drink of the river, I never saw but one instance of it, that of the Sid el Coom; as for Shekh Ibrahim, whom I shall speak of afterwards, he had passed a great part of his life at Kordofan. The venereal disease is frequent here, but never inveterate, insomuch that it does not prevent the marriage of either sex. Sweating and abstinence never fail to cure it, although, where it had continued for a time, I have known mercury fail.

The elephantiasis, so common in Abyssinia, is not known here. The small-pox is a disease not endemial in the country of Sennaar. It is sometimes twelve or fifteen years without its being known, notwithstanding the constant intercourse they have with, and merchandizes they bring from Arabia. It is likewise said this disease never broke out in Sennaar, unless in the rainy season. However, when it comes, it sweeps away a vast proportion of those that are infected: The women, both blacks and Arabs, those of the former that live in plains, like the Shillook, or inhabitants of El-aice, those of the Nuba and Guba, that live in mountains, all the various species of slaves that come from Dyre and Tegla, from time immemorial, have known a species of inoculation which they call Tishteree el Jidderee, or, the buying of the small pox. The women are the conductors of this operation in the fairest and driest season of the year, but never at other times. Upon the first hearing of the small-pox any where, these people go to the infected place, and, wrapping a fillet of cotton cloth about the arm of the person infected, they let it remain there

till they bargain with the mother how many she is to sell them. It is necessary that the terms be discussed judicially, and that the bargain be not made collusively or gratuitously, but that one piece of silver, or more, be paid for the number. This being concluded, they go home, and tie the fillet about their own child's arm; certain, as they say, from long experience, that the child infected is to do well, and not to have one more than the number of pustules that were agreed and paid for. There is no example, as far as I could learn, either here or in Abyssinia, of this disease returning, that is, attacking any one person more than once.

The trade of Sennaar is not great; they have no manufactures, but the principal article of consumption is blue cotton cloth from Surat. Formerly, when the ways were open, and merchants went in caravans with safety, Indian goods were brought in quantities to Sennaar from Jidda, and then dispersed over the black country. The return was made in gold, in powder called Tibbar, civet, rhinoceros's horns, ivory, ostrich feathers, and, above all, in slaves or glass, more of which was exported from Sennaar than all the rest of Africa together. But this trade is almost destroyed, so is that of the gold and ivory. However, the gold still keeps up its reputation of being the purest and best in Africa, and therefore bought at Mocha to be carried to India, where it all at last centers. If the wakea of Abyssinian gold sells at 16 patakas, the Sennaar gold sells at the same place for 22 patakas. The ivory sells at 11 oz.* per rotol at Cairo, which is about 25 per cent. lighter than the rotol of Mocha. Men-slaves, at a

* Ounce of gold is here meant.

medium, may be about a wakea per head at Sennaar. There are women, however, who sell for 13 or 14 wakeas. What their peculiar excellencies may be, which so far alter the price, I cannot tell; only they are preferred by rich people, both Turks and Moors, to the Arab, Circassian, and Georgian women, during the warm months in summer.

The Daveina Arabs, who are great hunters, carry the ivory to Abyssinia, where they are not in fear. But no caravan comes now from Sudan* to Sennaar, nor from Abyssinia or Cairo. The violence of the Arabs, and the faithlessness of the government of Sennaar, have shut them up on every side but that of Jidda, whither they go once a-year by Suakem.

The wakea of Sennaar, by which they sell gold, civet, scented oils, &c. consists of 10 drams; 10 of these wakeas make a rotol. This wakea at Sennaar is accounted the same as that of Masuah and Cairo. It is equal to 7 drams 57 grains troy weight.

1 Rotol 10 Wakeas.
1 Wakea 10 Drams.

But there is another wakea used by the merchants, called the Atareys.

1 Rotol 12 Wakeas.
1 Wakea 12 Drams.

But this is only used for coarse goods. There is but one long measure in Sennaar, called the Dra, which is the peek, or cubit, and is measured from the center of the elbow-joint to the point of the middle finger. This is probably the ancient cubit of Egypt, and of the holy Scripture.

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* Nigritia, or the black countries on both sides of the Niger.

I have said, that the 5th and 6th of August it rained, and the river brought down great quantities of fragments of houses which it had swept away from the country to the southward. It was a very unusual sight to observe a multitude of men swimming in this violent current, and then coming ashore riding upon sticks and pieces of timber. Many people make a trade of this, as fuel is exceedingly scarce at Sennaar. But there were other signs in this inundation, that occupied the imagination of this superstitious people. Part of the town had fallen, and a hyæna, as already observed, had come alive across the river, from which the wise ones drew melancholy presages.

I had not been out of the house for two days on account of the rain. On the 7th, I intended to have gone to Aira; but, on the morning was told by Hagi Belal, that Mahomet Abou Kalec had advanced to the river El-aice, to cross it into Atbara, and that Shekh Adelan had decamped from Aira, and was gone to meet him; to this it was added, that Wed Ageeb had been sent to by the king, to collect all his forces among the Arabs, and join him between Herbagi and Sennaar. It was foreseen that if this was true, a revolution of some kind was near at hand, probably the deposing and death of the king, and that, in the interim, all subordination would cease in the town, and every man do what seemed good in his own eyes.

Hagi Belal had, besides, told me, that Shekh Fidele of Teawa had been several days in the palace with the king, and had informed him that I was laden with money, besides a quantity of cloth of gold, the richest he had ever seen, which the king of Abyssinia had destined as a present to him, but which I had perverted to my own use. He added, that the king had expressed himself in a very threatening manner, and that he was very much afraid I was not in safety if Shekh

Adelan was gone from Aira. Upon this I desired Hagi Belal to go to the palace, and obtain for me an audience of the king. In vain he represented to me the risk I ran by this measure; I persisted in my resolution, I was tied to the stake. To fly was impossible, and I had often overcome such dangers by braving them.

He went then unwillingly to the palace. Whether he delivered the message I know not, but he returned saying, the king was busy, and could not be seen. I had, in the interim, sent Soliman to the Gindi, or Sid el Coom, telling him my difficulties, and the news I had heard. In place of returning an answer, he came directly to me himself; and was sitting with me when Hagi Belal returned, who, I thought, appeared somewhat disconcerted at the meeting. He told me the story of Abou Kalec was false, as also that of Wed Ageeb; but it was really true that Shekh Adelan had left Aira, and was then encamped at Shaddly. He chid Hagi Belal very sharply, asking him, what good all that tittle tattle did either to him or me; and insinuated pretty plainly, that he believed Hagi Belal did this in concert with the king to extort some present from me. "What is the difference to Yagoube," says he, "if Shekh Adelan be at Aira, three hours journey from Sennaar, or at Shaddly, five? Is not Kittou in town? and shall not I bring every slave of the king to join him upon the first requisition? At a time like this, will you persuade me, Hagi Belal, the king is not rather thinking of his own safety than of robbing Yagoube? I do not wish that Yagoube should stay a minute longer at Sennaar; but till some way be found to get necessaries for his journey, it is not in the king's power to hurt him in the house where he is; and he is much safer in Sennaar than he could be any where out of it. Before the king attempts to hurt

Yagoube, as long as he stays in Adelan's house, he will think twice of it, while any of the three brothers are alive. But I will speak to Kittou in the evening, and the king too, if I have an opportunity. In the mean time, do you, Yagoube, put your mind at rest, defend yourself if any body attempts to enter this house, and do what you will to those that shall force themselves into it." I then attended him down stairs with many professions of gratitude; and at the door he said, in a very low voice, to me, "Take care of yon Belal, he is a dog! worse than a Christian."

I resolved at all events to leave Sennaar, but I had not yet sounded Hagi Belal as to money-affairs. It was now the 20th; and, for several days since Adelan's departure, no provisions were sent to my house, as before was usual. Money therefore became absolutely necessary, not only for daily subsistence, but for camels to carry our baggage, provisions, and water, across the desert.

I now despaired absolutely of assistance of any kind from the king; and an accident that happened made me lay all thoughts aside of ever troubling him more upon the subject. There are at Mecca a number of black eunuchs, whose services are dedicated to that temple, and the sepulchre at Medina. Part of these, from time to time, procure liberty to return on a visit to their respective homes, or to the large cities they were sold from, on the Niger, Bournou, Tocrur*, and Tombucto, where they beg donations for the holy places, and frequently collect large sums of gold, which abounds in these towns and territories. One of these, called Mahomet Towash, which signifies Eunuch, had returned from a begging voyage in Sudan, or Nigritia, and was at Sennaar exceedingly ill of an intermit-

* Tocrur seems to be the native country of the people called Tucorory, or Tocruri, so often mentioned in this narrative.—E.

ting fever. The king had sent for me to visit him, and the bark in a few days had perfectly recovered him. A proportional degree of gratitude had, in return, taken place in the breast of Mahomet, who, going to Cairo, was exceedingly desirous of taking me with him, and this desire was increased when he heard I had letters from the Sherriffe of Mecca, and was acquainted with Metical Aga, who was his immediate master.

Nothing could be more fortunate than this rencounter at such a time; for he had spare camels in great plenty, and the Arabs, as he passed them, continued giving him more, and supported him with provisions wherever he went. For these people, being accounted sacred, and regarded with a certain religious awe, as being in the immediate service of their prophet, till now used to pass inviolate wherever they were going, however unsettled the times, or however slenderly attended.

Every thing was now ready, my instruments and baggage packed up, and the 25th of August fixed when we should begin our journey for Atbara. Mahomet, who passed a great part of his time at my house, had not been seen by us for several days, which we did not think extraordinary, being busy ourselves, and knowing that his trade demanded continual attendance on the great people; but we were exceedingly surprised at hearing from my black Soliman, that he and all his equipage had set out the night of the 20th for Atbara. This we found afterwards was at the earnest persuasion of the king, and was at that time a heavy disappointment to us, however fortunate it turned out afterwards.

The night of the 25th, which was to have been that of our departure, we sat late in my room up stairs, in the back, or most private part of the house. My little company was holding with me a melancholy coun-

cil on what had so recently happened, and, in general, upon the unpromising face of our affairs Our single lamp was burning very low, and suggested to us that it was the hour of sleep, to which, however, none of us were very much inclined. Georgis, a Greek, who, on account of the soreness of his eyes, had staid below in the dark, and had fallen asleep, came running up stairs in a great fright, and told us he had been wakened by the noise of men endeavouring to force open the door; that he hearkened a little, and found there were many of them. Our arms were all ready, and we snatched them up and ran towards the door; but I stopt, and planted them upon the first landing-place in the stair-case, as I wished not to fire till the enemy was fairly in the house, that no excuse might remain for this their violation of hospitality.

I stationed Ismael at the outer-door of the house, intending that he should fire first, as it would be less odious in him, being a Turk and a Sherriffe, than for us Christians. I then went out to the outer gate, and Soliman with me. The entry into the yard was through a kind of porter's lodge, where servants used to sit in the day-time, and sleep at night. It had a door from the street, and then another into the yard, the latter small, but very strong. They had forced the outer gate, and were then in the lodge, endeavouring *to do* the same, by the inner, having put a handspike under it to lift it up from the hinges. "Are you not madmen," said I, "and weary of your lives, to attempt to force Adelan's house, when there are within it men abundantly provided with large fire-arms, that, upon one discharge through the door, will lay you all dead where you now stand?" "Stand by from the door," cries Ismael, "and let me fire. These black Kafrs don't yet know what my blunderbuss is." They had been silent from the time I had spoken, and had with-

drawn the handspike from under the door. "Ullah! Ullah!" cries one of them softly, "how sound you sleep! we have been endeavouring to waken you this hour. The king is ill; tell Yagoube to come to the palace, and open the door instantly." "Tell the king," said I, "to drink warm water, and I will see him in the morning." "Ah! Mahomet," cries Soliman, "is that you? I thought you had had a narrow enough escape in the palace the other day; but stay a little, a servant is gone over the back wall to call the Gindi, and we are here numerous enough to defend this house till morning against all the servants the king has, so do not attempt to break the door, and Yagoube will go to the king with the Gindi."

At this time one of my servants fired a pistol in the air out of an upper window, upon which they all ran off. They seemed to be about ten or twelve in number, and left three handspikes behind them. The noise of the pistol brought the guard or patrole, in about half an hour, who carried intelligence to the Sid el Coom, our friend, by whom I was informed in the morning, that he had found them all out, and put them in irons; that Mahomet, the king's servant, who met us at Teawa, was one of them; and that there was no possibility now of concealing this from Adelan, who would order him to be impaled.

Things were now come to such a crisis, that I was determined to leave my instruments and papers with Kittou, Adelan's brother, or with the Sid el Coom, while I went to Shaddly to see Adelan. But first I thought it necessary to apply to Hagi Belal to try what funds we could raise to provide the necessaries for our journey. I shewed him the letter of Ibrahim, the English broker of Jidda, of which before he had received a copy and repeated advices, and told him I should want 200 sequins at least, for my camels and provi-

sions, as well as for some presents that I should have occasion for, to make my way to the great men in Atbara. Never was surprise better counterfeited than by this man. He held up his hands in the utmost astonishment, repeating, 200 sequins! over twenty times, and asked me if I thought money grew upon trees at Sennaar; that it was with the utmost difficulty he could spare me 20 dollars, part of which he must borrow from a friend.

This was a stroke that seemed to insure our destruction, no other resource being now left. We were already indebted to Hagi Belal twenty dollars for provision; we had seven mouths to feed daily; and as we had neither meat, money, nor credit, to continue at Sennaar was impossible. We had seen, a few nights before, that no house could protect us there; and to leave Sennaar was, in our situation, as impossible as to stay here. We had neither camels to carry our provisions and baggage, nor skins for our water; nor, indeed, any provisions to carry, nor money to supply us with any of these, nor knew any person that could give us assistance nearer than Cairo, from which we were then distant about 17 degrees of the meridian, or above 1000 miles in a straight line; great part of which was through the most barren, unhospitable deserts in the world, destitute of all vegetation, and of every animal that had the breath of life. Hagi Belal was inflexible; he began now to be weary of us, to see us but seldom, and there was great appearance of his soon withdrawing himself entirely.

My servants began to murmur; some of them had known of my gold chain from the beginning, and these, in the common danger, imparted what they knew to the rest. In short, I resolved, though very unwillingly, not to sacrifice my own life and that of my servants, and the finishing my travels, now so far

advanced, to childish vanity. I determined therefore to abandon my gold chain, the honourable recompense of a day full of fatigue and danger. Whom to intrust it to was the next consideration; and, upon mature deliberation, I found it could be to nobody but Hagi Belal, bad as I had reason to think he was. However, to put a check upon him, I sent for the Sid el Coom, in whose presence I repeated my accusation against Belal; I read the Seràff's letter in my favour, and the several letters that Belal had written me whilst I was at Gondar, declaring his acceptance of the order to furnish me with money when I should arrive at Sennaar; and I upbraided him, in the strongest terms, with duplicity and breach of faith.

But all that I could say was very far short of the violent expostulation from the Gindi that immediately followed. He gave Hagi Belal many not obscure hints, "that he looked upon this injury as done to himself, and would repay him; that though he had done this to please the king, the time might not be far off when that favour would be of very little use to him; on the contrary, might be a reason for stripping him of all he had in the world." The force of these arguments seemed to strike Hagi Belal's imagination very powerfully. He even offered to advance 50 sequins, and to see if he could raise any more among his friends. The Gindi (a rare instance in that country) offered to lend him fifty. But the dye was now cast, the chain had been produced and seen, and it was become exceedingly dangerous to carry such a quantity of gold in any shape along with me. I therefore consented to sell it to Hagi Belal, in presence of the Gindi; and we immediately set about the purchase of necessaries, with this proviso, that if Adelan, upon my going to Shaddly, did furnish me with camels and

necessaries, so much of the chain should be returned.

It was the 5th of September that we were all prepared to leave this capital of Nubia, an inhospitable country from the beginning, and which, every day we continued in it, had engaged us in greater difficulties and dangers. We flattered ourselves, that, once disengaged from this bad step, the greatest part of our sufferings was over; for we apprehended nothing but from men, and, with very great reason, thought we had seen the worst of them.

In the evening I received a message from the king to come directly to the palace. I accordingly obeyed, taking two servants along with me, and found him sitting in a little, low chamber, very neatly fitted up with chintz, or printed calico curtains, of a very gay and glaring pattern. He was smoking with a very long Persian pipe through water, was alone, and seemed rather grave than in ill humour. He gave me his hand to kiss as usual, and, after pausing a moment without speaking (during which I was standing before him), a slave brought me a little stool, and set it down just opposite to him; upon which he said, in a low voice, so that I could scarcely hear him, "Fudda, sit down," pointing to the stool. I sat down accordingly. "You are going, I hear," says he, "to *Adelan*?" I answered, "Yes." "Did he send for you?" I said, "No; but, as I wanted to return to Egypt, I expected letters from him in answer to those I brought from Cairo." He told me, Ali Bey, that wrote these letters was dead; and asked me if I knew Mahomet Abou Dahab? *Yagoube.* "Perfectly; I was well acquainted with him and the other members of government, all of whom treated me well, and respected my nation." *King.* "You are not so gay as when you first arrived here?" *Ya.* "I have had no very

great reason." Our conversation was now taking a very laconic and serious turn, but he did not seem to understand the meaning of what I said last. *K.* "Adelan has sent for you by my desire; Wed Abroff and all the Jehaina Arabs have rebelled, and will pay no tribute. They say you have a quantity of powerful fire-arms with you that will kill twenty or thirty men at a shot." *Ya.* "Say fifty or sixty, if it hits them." *K.* "He is therefore to employ you with your guns to punish those Arabs, and spoil them of their camels, part of which he will give to you." I presently understood what he meant, and only answered, "I am a stranger here, and desire to hurt no man. My arms are for my own defence against robbery and violence." At this instant the Turk, Hagi Ismael, cried from without the door, in broken Arabic, "Why did not you tell those black Kafrs, you sent to rob and murder us the other night, to stay a little longer, and you would have been better able to judge what our fire-arms can do, without sending for us either to Abroff or Adelan. By the head of the prophet! let them come in the day-time, and I will fight ten of the best you have in Sennaar."

K. "The man is mad, but he brings me to speak of what was in my head when I desired to see you. Adelan has been informed that Mahomet, my servant, who brought you from Teawa, has been guilty of a drunken frolic at the door of his house, and has sent soldiers to take him to-day, with two or three others of his companions." *Ya.* "I know nothing about Mahomet, nor do I drink with him, or give him drink. About half a score of people broke into Adelan's house in the night, with a view to rob and murder us, but I was not at the pains to fire at such wretches as these. Two or three servants with sticks were all that were needful. I understand, indeed,

that Shekh Adelan is exceedingly displeased that I did not fire at them, and has sent to the Gindi, ordering him to deliver two of them to him to-morrow, to be executed publicly before the door of his house on the market-day. But this, you know, is among yourselves. I am very well pleased none of them are dead, as they might have been, by my hands or those of my people." *K.* "True; but Adelan is not king, and I charge you when you see him to ask for Mahomet's life, or a considerable deal of blame will fall upon you. When you return back, I will send him to conduct you to the frontiers of Egypt." Upon this I bowed, and took my leave. I went home perfectly determined what I was to do. I had now obtained from the king an involuntary safe-guard till I should arrive at Adelan's; that is, I was sure, that, in hopes I might procure a reprieve for Mahomet, no trap would be laid for me on the road. I determined, therefore, to make the best use of my time; and every thing being ready, we loaded the camels, and sent them forward that night to a small village called Soliman, three or four miles from Sennaar; and having settled my accounts with Hagi Belal, I received back six links, the miserable remains of one hundred and eighty-four, of which my noble chain once consisted.

This traitor kept me the few last minutes to write a letter to the English at Jidda, to recommend him for the service he had done me at Sennaar; and this I complied with, that I might inform the broker Ibrahim that I had received no money from his correspondent, and give him a caution never again to trust Hagi Belal in similar circumstances.

CHAP. X.

Journey from Sennaar to Chendi.

AFTER leaving Sennaar I was overtaken on the road by a black slave, who at first gave me some apprehension, as I was alone with only one barbarian, a Nubian servant, by the side of my camel, and was going slowly. Upon inquiry I found him to be sent from Hagi Belal, with a basket containing some green tea and sugar, and four bottles of rack, in return for my letter. I sent back the messenger, and gave the care of the basket to my own servant; and, about ten o'clock in the evening of the fifth of September, we all met together joyfully at Soliman.

Before my departure from Sennaar I had prevailed on a Fakir, or Mahometan monk, servant to Adelan, to write a letter to his master, unknown to any other person whatever, to let him know my apprehensions of the king, and that, in the uncertainty how far his occupations might oblige him to move from Shaddly, my way was directly for Herbagi, and requesting that he would give me such recommendations to Wed Ageeb as should put me in safety from the king's persecution, and insure me protection and good reception in Atbara. I begged him, in the most serious manner, to consider, however slightly he had thought of the king of Abyssinia's recommendatory letters, he

would not treat those of the regency of Cairo, and of the sherriffe of Mecca, in the same manner; that my nation was highly respected in both places; and that it was known, by letters written from Sennaar, that I actually was arrived there; that they should take care therefore, and not by ill-usage of me expose their merchants, either at Mecca or Cairo, to a severe retaliation that would immediately follow the receiving bad news of me, or no news at all. My faithful Soliman, who was now to leave me, was charged to carry the answers they should choose to return to the letters I brought from Abyssinia, and I sent him that very night, together with the Fakir, to Adelan at Shaddly, fully instructed with every particular of ill-usage I had received from the king, of which he had been an eye-witness.

Although my servants, as well as Hagi Belal, and every one at Sennaar but the Fakir and Soliman, did imagine I was going to Shaddly, yet their own fears, or rather good sense, had convinced them that it was better to proceed at once for Atbara, than ever again to be entangled between Adelan and the king. Sennaar sat heavy upon all their spirits, so that I had scarce dismounted from my camel, and before I tasted food, which that day I had not done, when they all intreated me with one voice that I would consider the dangers I had escaped, and, instead of turning westward to Shaddly, continue north through Atbara. They promised to bear fatigue and hunger cheerfully, and to live and die with me, provided I would proceed homeward, and free them from the horrors of Sennaar and its king. I did not seem to be convinced by what they said, but ordered supper, to which we all sat down in company. As we had lemons enough, and Hagi Belal had furnished us with sugar, we opened a bottle of his rack, and in punch (the liquor of our

country) drank to a happy return through Atbara. I then told them my resolution was perfectly conformable to their wishes; and informed them of the measures I had taken to insure success and remove danger as much as possible. I recommended diligence, sobriety, and subordination, as the only means of arriving happily at the end proposed; and assured them all we should share one common fare, and one common fortune, till our journey was terminated by good or bad success. Never was any discourse more gratefully received; every toil was welcome in flying from Sennaar, and they already began to think themselves at the gates of Cairo.

As I had recommended great diligence and little sleep, before four in the morning the camels were loaded, and on their way, and it was then only they came to awake me. The camels were abundantly loaded, and we had then but five, four of which carried all the baggage, the other, a smaller one, was reserved for my riding. This I told them I willingly accepted at the beginning of the journey, and we should all of us take our turn, while water and provisions were to be procured, and that Ismael the Turk, an old man, and Georgis the Greek, almost blind, required an additional consideration, so long as it possibly could be done with safety to us all; but, when we should advance to the borders of the desert, we must all resolve to pass that journey on foot, as upon the quantity of water, and the quantity of provisions alone, to be carried by us, could depend our hopes of ever seeing home.

On the 8th of September we left the village of Soliman, and about three o'clock in the afternoon came to Wed el Tumbel, which is not a river, as the name would seem to signify, but three villages situated upon a pool of water, nearly in a line from north to south.

The intermediate country between this and Herbagi is covered with great crops of dora. The plain extends as far as the sight reaches. Though there is not much wood, the country is not entirely destitute of it, and the farther you go from Sennaar the finer the trees. At Wed el Tumbel there is great plenty of ebony bushes, and a particular sort of thorn which seems to be a species of dwarf acacia, with very small leaves, and long pods of a strong saccharine taste. This is here in great abundance, and is called Lauts, or Loto, which I suspect to be the tree on whose fruit, we are told, the ancient Libyans fed. At a quarter past three we left Wed el Tumbel, and entered into a thick wood, in which we travelled till late, when we came to the Nile. We continued along the river for about 500 yards, and alighted at Sit el Bet, a small village about a mile's distance from the stream. Here we saw the tomb of a Shekh, or saint, built of brick in a conical form, much after the same figure as some we had seen in Barbary, which were of stone.

On the 12th, at ten minutes past six, we set out from Sit el Bet, and a few minutes after came to a village called Ageda, and five miles further to another, whose name is Usheta. At half past nine we passed a third village, and at half past eleven encamped near a pool of water, called Wed Hydar, or the River of the Lion. All the way from Wed el Tumbel to this village we were much tormented with the fly, the very noise of which put our camels in such a fright, that they ran violently into the thickest trees and bushes, endeavouring to brush off their loads. These flies do not bite at night, nor in the cool of the morning. We were freed from this disagreeable companion at Wed Hydar, and were troubled with it no more.

At four o clock we again set out through an extensive plain, quite destitute of wood, and all sown with dora, and about five miles further we encamped at a place named Shwyb, where there is a Shekh called Welled Abou Hassan. While with Abou Hassan, we were surprised with a violent storm of rain and wind, accompanied with great flashes of lightning. This storm being blown over, we proceeded to a village called Imsurt. At one mile and a half further we joined the river. The Nile here is in extreme beauty, and winds considerably; it is broader than at Sennaar, the banks flat, and quite covered with acacia and other trees in full bloom. The thick parts of this wood were stored with great numbers of antelopes, while the open places were covered with large flocks of cattle belonging to the Arabs Refaa, who were returning from the sands to their pastures to the southward. Large flocks of storks, cranes, and a variety of other birds, were scattered throughout the plain, which was overgrown with fine grass, and which even the multitude of cattle that thronged upon it seemed not capable of consuming. At three quarters past six in the evening we came to a large village called Wed Medinai, close upon the side of the river, which here having made a large turn, comes again from the S. E. This town or village belongs to a Fakir, who received us very hospitably.

On the 14th, at six in the morning, we set out from Wed Medinai in a direction N. W. and at three quarters past eight arrived at the village Beroule. We then entered a thick wood, and thence into a very extensive and cultivated plain, sown with dora and bammia, a plant which makes a principal article in their food all over the southern part of the kingdom of Sennaar, which is described, and the figure of it

published, by Prosper Alpinus *. At a quarter past eleven we arrived at Azazo, about a mile and a half distant from the Nile. The corn seemed here much more forward than that at Sennaar, and in several places it was in the ear. It rained copiously in the night of the 14th, but before this there had been a very dry season, and very great scarcity the preceding year. At ten minutes past four in the afternoon we left Azazo, our journey, like that of the day before, partly through thick woods, and partly through plains sown with dora. Our direction was nearly north, and the river about two miles and a half distant, nearly parallel to the road we went. At six we came to a small village called Sidi Ali el Genowi.

On the 16th, at half past six in the morning, we left Sidi Ali el Genowi, and a few minutes after passed two villages on our left along the river side, not fifty yards from the water, after which we went through the village of El Mensy. The next to this were two tombs of Fakirs, nothing different from the former ones. At a quarter past ten we arrived at Herbagi, a large and pleasant village, but thinly inhabited, placed on a dry, gravelly soil. The people told us, that the greatest part of the townsmen were at some distance looking after their farms. Herbagi is the seat of Wed Ageeb, hereditary prince of the Arabs, now subject to the government of Sennaar, whose lieutenant he is according to treaty. He raises the tribute, and pays it to the Mek, or his ministers, from all those Arabs that live in the distant parts of the kingdom, as far as the Red Sea, who do not pass by Sennaar to

* Vid. Prosper Alpin. cap. 27, page 44. tom. 2.

the sands, in the season of the fly; for these, as I have mentioned, are taxed by the chief minister, or the person who has the command of the troops of that capital. The revenue arising from this is very large, and more than all the rest put together. The Refaa, one tribe of Arabs who had compounded at this time with Shekh Adelan, were said to possess 200,000 she camels, every one of which, at a medium, was worth half an ounce of gold, each ounce being about ten crowns. The tribute then which that Arab paid was 100,000 ounces of gold, or 1,000,000 dollars, or 250,000l. There were at least ten of these tribes with which Adelan was to account, and at least six times that number that fell to the share of Wed Ageeb, whose composition is the same as that paid to Sennaar, besides whatever extraordinary sum he imposes for himself. There is also a tax upon the male camels; but this is small in comparison of the others, and the young ones pay no duty, till they are three years old.

Camels flesh is the ordinary food of the Arabs; but there is still room to inquire what becomes of the prodigious numbers of this animal annually consumed. The caravan of Mecca requires a large supply, and vast numbers are employed in the service of Damascus, of Syria and Persia, and especially of Sudan, whose caravans traverse Africa from east to west with Indian commodities, which they carry from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. These, and this vast inland trade of which they were masters, the gold, ivory, pearls, and tortoise shells, that served for returns to India, were the source of the riches and power of those Shepherds, of which so many things are recorded in ancient history, almost exceeding belief.

Immediately upon entering Herbagi, I went to wait upon Wed Ageeb. He had a very good house, considered as such, though but a very indifferent palace for a prince. He seemed to be a man of very gentle manners; was about 30 years of age; had a thick black beard and whiskers, large black eyes, and a long thin face, which marked his constitution not to be a strong one. We found, indeed, afterwards, that he had been very much addicted to drinking, which he had often endeavoured in vain to leave off, by substituting opium in its place. He had never before seen an European, and testified great surprise at my complexion. He sent us abundance of provisions, two sheep and two goats, and begged I would give him advice about his health in the evening. He inquired very particularly about my reception at Sennaar, which I told him only in part, and among other circumstances, the report at Sennaar, that he was gathering his forces to the assistance of the king against Adelan and Abou Kalec. He answered with a sneer, "Gehennim el Kafr," *i. e. The Pagan may go to hell.* He spoke contemptuously of the king of Sennaar, but very respectfully of Adelan and Abou Kalec, any one of whose little fingers, he said, was sufficient to crush the Mek, and all who adhered to him. I then took my leave, and went home to rest.

On the 17th, at noon, I observed the meridian altitude of the sun, and found the latitude of the place to be 14° 39′ N.; but this observation was made with Hadley's quadrant, that I might save time, being willing to advance to as great a distance as possible from Sennaar, so there may be perhaps a minute of error, and more there ought not to be, as it was confirmed by several observations at night. The instrument, inspected and rectified by day-light,

was examined, and I found it to be without alteration before using it at night.

About eight o'clock in the evening I went to see Wed Aegeb, who had supped, and was drinking sorbet made of tamarinds, I believe rather to sweeten his breath than from thirst, for he had apparently drunk of stronger liquor before he took the sorbet. He told me that a servant of Adelan was arrived that evening from the camp, who had brought him a letter and messages on my account, and bade me be of good courage, for I should be safer in my tent than in Adelan's house at Sennaar; that two men had been executed for attempting to rob Adelan's house; and that Mahomet, the king's servant, was destined to suffer upon a stake, as soon as ever Adelan should move at a greater distance from Shekh Shaddly's tomb, where such executions could not be performed with decency.

I made him a small present of fine muslin, which I had bought at Sennaar; and, in the course of conversation, he told me that the Moorish troops from Ras el Feel had burnt Teawa; that the Daveina were with them, and had plundered the Jehaina, and forced Fidele to fly to Beyla. I asked if any Christian troops were among them? suspecting much Ayto Engedan and Ayto Confu. He said there were none but the Moors of Ras el Feel, the Ganjar horse of Kuara, and the Arabs Daveina. As I did not wish to be known in this matter, I pushed my inquiries no further: I asked him to provide me with one of his men for fear of the Shukorea Arabs, with which he complied, adding, that he was himself going out to the Shukorea, and would send a man to Halfaia, where I was to consider, and acquaint him, whether I was to pass the Nile at Gerri, and go by the desert of Bahiouda and Dongola, or by the more unfrequent-

ed way of Chendi, Barbar, and the Great Desert, the fatigues and dangers of which he thought it impossible for a European to suffer, but would give me a letter to Sittina his sister, to whom that country belonged. After Chendi, he assured me there was no protection to be relied upon but that of Heaven. This sensible discourse was of great service to me, as it set me all the rest of the journey upon the inquiry as to the proper steps for performing this dangerous expedition.

On the 18th, at seven o'clock, I left Herbagi, after writing a letter to Adelan, thanking him for his punctuality and care of me, and giving the servant that had come on the errand a small present. He told me it would be ten days before he returned to the camp; with which last intelligence I was very well pleased, as thereby no information could arrive where I was, till I was forgot, or out of their power. At ten minutes past eleven we arrived at Wed el Frook, a small village close upon the Nile. Nothing could be more beautiful than the country we passed that day, partly covered with very pleasant woods, and partly in lawns, with a few fine scattered trees. The Nile is a short quarter of a mile from the village, and is fully half a mile broad. It runs smooth, and when in inundation, overflows the small space of ground between its present banks and Wed el Frook. It was now considerably lower than it had been, and was confined within its banks.

On the 19th we set out from Wed el Frook at half past five in the morning, and about four miles from it came to a large village, and the tomb of a Fakir, the Nile running all the way parallel to our road. At ten o'clock we came to another village called Abouascar; and a little way east of it, in the river, there is a large island, considerably above the water, where

shrubs and grass grow abundantly. The village is placed upon a small hill, and there are a great many of the same size and shape scattered about the country on the banks of the river, which add greatly to the beauty of it, as we had not yet seen such since our leaving Sennaar. At three quarters past one we came to the village of Kamily. The country here is more open, the soil lighter, the grass short and thin; it is all laid out in pasture, and there is here plenty of goats, as well as black cattle. This day we met a caravan from Egypt, last from Chendi, who brought us word that Ali Bey was deposed, and Mahomet Abou Dahab was made Bey in his place. They said one part of the caravan, that went before them, had been attacked and cut off by the Bishareen under Abou Bertran; that they had escaped by a few hours only, and that all the road was so infested with robbers, that it was a miracle if any one could pass.

On the 20th we left Kamily at a quarter past five in the morning, and at about six miles (the distance between that and Wed Tyrab) we passed a bare and sandy country, interspersed with small coppices, and three quarters past ten came to Bishaggara. This is a large village, something above a mile's distance from the Nile, which space is entirely taken up with brushwood, without any timber trees. We began now to see the effects of the quantity of rain having failed. There was little sown, and that so late as to be scarcely above the ground. It seems the rains begin later as they pass northward. Many people were here employed in gathering grass seeds*, to make a very bad kind of bread. These people appear perfect skeletons,

* We had seen this practised too by the Agows at the source of the Nile.

and no wonder, as they live upon such fare. Nothing increases the danger of travelling, and prejudice against strangers, more than the scarcity of provisions in the country through which you are to pass.

At fifty minutes past three in the afternoon we left Bishaggara, and at seven came to Eltie, a straggling village, about half a mile from the Nile, in the north of a large, bare plain, all pasture, except the banks of the river, which are covered with wood. We now no longer saw any corn sown: The people here were at the same miserable employment as those we had seen before, that of gathering grass-seeds; yet, though starving, they brought us plenty of milk in exchange for tobacco, a commodity very much in request in these parts. At half past ten we arrived at Gidid; the houses were built of clay, with terrassed roofs: on our way we passed through several little cantonments of Nuba. All this country is sand, interspersed with thick coppices and acacia-trees that seemed not to thrive. On the other side are large, dead, sandy plains, but both sides of the river are covered with wood. The ferry over the Nile is here from the west to the east. The country about Gidid, especially to the westward, is very bare and barren, and scarcely produces any thing saving grass and bent, of which the poor people use the seed for bread. This is the case all to the westward of El-aice; and the country here, for want of rain, is fast dwindling into a desert, and the soil is changed to sand. There is no corn, though, from the vicinity of two large rivers, it produces grass enough for cattle, sheep, and goats, and there is as yet plenty of milk: but as soon as the sun shines constantly, no herbage will remain that can be food for any other cattle but goats, and at last the

whole becomes a perfect desert, capable of nourishing nothing but antelopes and ostriches.

On the 21st, at seven in the morning, we left Gidid, and near three miles farther we came to the passage, and descended a long way with the current before we landed. The manner they pass the camels at this ferry is by fastening cords under their hind quarters, and then tying a halter to their heads. Two men sustain these cords, and a third the halter, so that the camels, by swimming, carry the boat on shore. One is fastened on each side of the stern, and one along each side of the stem. These useful beasts suffer much by this rude treatment, and many die in the passage, with all the care that can be taken, but often through malice, or out of revenge. These boatmen privately put salt in the camel's ears, which makes the animal desperate and ungovernable, till, by fretting and plunging his head constantly in the water, he loses his breath, and is drowned; the boatmen then have gained their end, and feast upon the flesh. But the Arabs, when they pass their camels, use a goat's skin, blown with wind like a bladder, which they tie to the fore part of the camel, and this supports him where he is heaviest, while the man, sitting behind on his rump, guides him; for this animal is a very bad swimmer, being heaviest before. The boats here are larger and better made than in any other part on the river. All between the Nile and Halifoon is bare ground, interspersed with acacia-trees. The loss of a camel is very considerable, but the price of ferrying very moderate; it is only three mahalacs for each camel, with his merchandise and every thing belonging to him. The river is something more than a quarter of a mile broad, but is double that measure in the rainy season, the current very violent and strong at all times.

Notwithstanding our boatmen had a very bad character at this time, we passed with our camels and baggage without loss or accident. They seemed indeed to shew a very indifferent countenance at first, but good words, and a promise of recompence, presently rendered them tractable. By half past twelve we were all safe on the other side, and at thirty-five minutes past three we arrived at Halifoon, about five miles from the ferry on the east side of the Nile. One mark of the boatmen's attention I cannot but mention: The weather was very hot, and we had plenty of time; the water being clear and tempting, I proposed swimming over to the other side for the pleasure of bathing; but they, one and all, opposed my design with great violence, and would not suffer me to undress. They said there was a multitude of crocodiles in the river near that place, and although they were not large enough to kill, or carry off a camel, they very often wounded them, and it would be a wonder if we passed without seeing them; indeed the last boat had not reached the shore before two of them rose in the middle of the stream. I made what haste I could to get a gun, and fired at the largest, but, as far as I could judge, without effect.

On the 22d, at three o'clock in the afternoon, we left Halifoon, and by ten at night came to Halfaia, a large, handsome, and pleasant town, although built with clay. The houses are terrassed at the tops, their inhabitants being no longer afraid of the rains, which have been for some time here very inconsiderable. The Battaheen were encamped near Umdoom, a large village on the side of the river, about seven miles from Halifoon. They are a thievish, pilfering set, and we passed them early in the morning, before it was light. The road is very pleasant,

through woods of acacia-trees, interspersed with large fields covered with bent grass. At Umdoom we found troops of women going to their morning occupation, that of gathering seeds to make bread.

The command of Mahomet Wed Ageeb is very extensive. It reaches from this passage of the river at Halifoon on the south, as far as Wed Baal a Nagga on the north, and to the east as far as the Red Sea, though a great part of those Arabs have been in rebellion, and have not paid their tax for some years. His command on the westward of the river reaches to Korti, all over the desert of Bahiouda, though lately the Beni Gerar, Beni Faisara, and Cubba-beesh, have expelled the ancient Arabs of Bahiouda, who pretend now only to be the subjects of Kordofan. He has also the charge of levying the tribute of horses from Dongola, in which consists the great strength of Sennaar.

Halfaia is the limit of the rains, and is situated upon a large circular peninsula surrounded by the Nile from S. W. to N. W. that is, at all the points of W. It is half a mile, or something more, from the river. This peninsula contains all their sown land, and is not watered by the river, but by what is raised from the stream by wheels turned by oxen. Halfaia consists of about three hundred houses; their principal gain is from a manufacture of very coarse cotton cloth, called Dimour, which serves for small money through all the lower parts of Atbara. There are palm-trees at Halfaia, but they produce no dates. The people here eat cats, also the river horse and the crocodile, both of which are in great plenty. Halfaia, by many altitudes of the sun and stars, was found to be in lat. 15° 45′ 54″, and in long. 32° 49′ 15″ east from the meridian of Greenwich.

On the 29th, at six o'clock in the morning, we left Halfaia, and continued our journey about three miles and a half further, when we came to two villages, a small one to the north, and a large one to the west.—The Nile here runs N. E. of us. This whole day was spent in woods of a very pleasant kind; there were large numbers of birds of various colours, but none of them, so far as I could hear since we left Sennaar, endowed with the gift of song. Sakies * in the plain, all between the Nile and the road, lift the water from the stream, and pour it on the land, in hopes that it may produce some miserable crops of dora; for the river overflows none of this country, and it is very precariously and scantily watered with rain.

In a little time, continuing our journey, we came to Shekh Atman's, the tomb of a Fakir on the road.—There is a high ridge of mountains on our left, west of the Nile about five miles, and a low ridge on our right, about eight miles distant; our direction was straight north. At half past eight, about five miles further, we came to the village Wed Hojila. The river Abiad, which is larger than the Nile, joins it there. Still the Nile preserves the name of Bahar el Azergue, or the Blue river, which it got at Sennaar. The village was once intended to be built at the junction of the two rivers, but the Fakir's tomb being on the side of the Nile, the village likewise was placed there. The Abiad is a very deep river; it runs dead and with little inclination, and preserves its stream always undiminished, because, rising in latitudes where there are continual rains, it, therefore, suffers not the decrease the Nile does by the six months dry weather.

* A machine for raising water from the Nile, otherwise called the Persian wheel.

Our whole journey this day was through woods, with large intervals of sandy plains, producing nothing except some few spots of corn sown in time of the showers, while the sun returned over the zenith, but still looking very poorly. At half past twelve we arrived at Suakem, under trees, near a sakia. At four o'clock in the afternoon we left Suakem, the mountains of Gerri bearing N. E. of us, and, five miles further, alighted in a wood near the Arabs Abdelab.

On the 30th, at five o'clock in the morning, we left this station, and after having gone eight miles N. E. we came to a village, which is, as it were, the suburb of Gerri. The Acaba of Gerri is a low ridge of rocks that seems first to run from both sides across the bed of the river, as if designed to stop it; and it is impossible to look at the gap through which it falls down below, without thinking that this passage was made by the Nile itself when first it began to flow. Gerri is built on a rising ground, consisting of white barren sand and gravel, intermixed with white alabaster, like pebbles, which, in a bright sun, are extremely disagreeable to the eye. It consists of about 140 houses, none of them above one storey high, neat, well-built, flat-roofed, and all of one height, composed with the same coloured earth as that on which it stands, and, for this reason, it is scarcely visible at a distance. It is immediately at the foot of the Acaba, something more than a quarter of a mile from the Nile. Gerri is situated at the end of the tropical rains, in lat. 16° 15′, and the Acaba seems to answer those mountains of Ptolemy, beyond which (that is to the N.), he says it is διαμμον και αβροχον χωραν *, that is, a country full of sand and without rain; it is but a small spot im-

* Ptol. Geograph. lib. iv. cap. 8.

mediately on the Nile, which is all cultivated, as it enjoys the double advantage both of the overflowing of the river and the accidental showers. It is also called Beladullah, or the country of God, on account of this double blessing. The dates of Gerri are sent to the Mek, and are reserved on purpose for him. They are dry, and never ripen, nor have any of the moist and pulpy substance of the dates of Barbary. They are firm and smooth in the skin, and of a golden colour.

On the 1st of October, at half past five in the morning, we left Gerri, the Acaba continuing on the east and west, but the two extremities curving, like a bow, or an amphitheatre. This ridge of mountains is composed of bare, red stone, without any grass. At ten minutes after eight we changed our road to N. E. endeavouring to turn the point of the Acaba about three miles off, and, at ten o'clock, alighted among green trees to feed our camels. At three o'clock in the afternoon we left our resting-place in the wood.—The mountains, which were then on our left hand, are those of the Acaba of Gerri; but those on the right still ran parallel to our course, and ended in the Acaba of Morness: we were now two miles from the river, its course due north. About twenty minutes past four we came to the Acaba of Morness, a ridge of bare stony hills, and half an hour after we passed it. There is very little ascent, and the road is only loose, broken stones, which last about a quarter of an hour.

At six o'clock in the evening we came to Hajar el Assad, or Hajar Serrareek, the first signifying the Lion's Stone, the next the stone of Thieves, a beggarly straggling village, where there is a sakia, and small stripes of dora, as if sown in a garden, and watered from the well at pleasure. Hajar el Assad is the

boundary between Wed Ageeb and the Mek of Chendi; it is a yellow stone set upon a rock, which they imagine has the figure of a lion. We now alighted near half a mile from the river in a small plain, where was only one shepherd with his cot and flock. At some distance, near the river, there was a house or two with sakies. September is the seed-time in this country. When the Nile is at its height, the flat ground along the side of the water, which is about a quarter of a mile broad, is sown with dora, as far as water can be conducted in rills to it, but after this short space, the ground rises immediately; there the harvest-time is in November; and the seed time at Sennaar is in July, and their harvest in September; both regulated by the height of the Nile at their respective places.

On the 2d of October, at half past five in the morning, we left Hajar el Assad; for the two last days past our journey lay through woods and desert, without water or villages; we rested upon the Nile, which soon receded from us. After having gone about two miles, we saw some small houses and sakies, with narrow stripes of corn on both sides of the river. About a mile further, we began, instead of the sandy desert, to see large stratums of purple, red, and white marble, and also alabaster. It seems as if those immense quarries, which run into Upper Egypt 10° N. from this, first take their rise here. This day we journied through woods of acacia and jujebs. At twenty minutes past eight we alighted in a wood to feed our camels. The sun was so immoderately hot that we could not travel. The Nile from Gerri declines almost insensibly from the E. of N. The whole country is desert and without inhabitants, saving the banks of the river; for there are here no regular rains that can be depended upon at any certain time for the pur-

pose of agriculture; only there fall violent showers at the time the sun is in the zenith, on his progress southward from the tropic of Cancer towards the Line, and the grass grows up very luxuriantly in all the spots watered by these accidental showers; but all the rest of the country is dry and burnt up.

Near Gerri, a little north, is the large rock Acaba, full of caves, the first habitations of the builders of Meroe. A little below it is the ferry over which those who go by the west side of the Nile to Dongola, through the desert of Bahiouda, must all pass. It is five days journey before you come to Korti, where travellers arrive the morning of the sixth, that is, going at the rate of fifteen miles a day. Near Korti you again meet the Nile, which has taken a very unnatural turn from Magiran, or where it meets the Tacazze from Angot. The way through this desert, which was that of Poncet, is now rendered impassable, as I have already said, by the Beni Faisara, Beni Gerar, and Cubba-beesh Arabs, three powerful clans, which come from the westward near Kordofan from fear of the black horse there, and which have taken possession of all the wells in that desert; so that it is impossible for travellers to avoid them. The Cubba-beesh are so called, from kebsh*, a sheep, because they wear the skin of that animal for clothing. They are very numerous, and extend far into the great desert Selima and to the frontiers of Egypt. These tribes have cut off the last three caravans coming from Dongola and Egypt. This ferry, and the Acaba beyond it, belongs to Wed Ageeb; and here all goods, passing to and from Egypt, Dongola, and Chendi, pay a duty, which is not regulated as to its extent, but is

* Kebsh, a sheep; pl. Cubba-beesh, sheep.

levied arbitrarily, according to the circumstances of the times, and paid to the Shukorea, or other Arabs, who are in the neighbourhood, which happens from February to July. The Mek, or prince of the Arabs, passes them by fair means or force. After the rains become constant, these go eastward to Mendera and Gooz; and then the road from Sennaar to Suakem through these places becoming dangerous on account of all the other Arabs assembling there to avoid the fly, the caravan of Suakem is obliged to pass through Halfaia to Barbar, and from thence to Suakem, so that this was the most frequented road in the kingdom. Now, indeed, the communications on all sides are obstructed by the anarchy that prevails among the Arabs, so that he who passes to or from Egypt must depend solely upon his own exertions and the protection of Heaven.

The Acaba of Gerri, and the banks of the Nile there, are inhabited by tribes of Arabs, called Beni Hamda, and Hassani. They are all poor and miserable banditti, and would not suffer a man to pass there at the ferry were it not for the extraordinary dread they have of fire-arms. The report of a gun, even at a distance, will make a hundred of them fly and hide themselves. We gave them several vollies of blunderbusses, and double-barrelled guns, fired in the air, from the time of our entering their territory till near Wed Baal a Nagga; we saw them upon the tops of the pointed rocks as far distant as we could wish, nor did they ever appear nearer us, or descend into the plain.

At Halfaia and Gerri begins that noble race of horses justly celebrated all over the world. They are the breed that was introduced here at the Saracen conquest, and have been preserved unmixed to this day. They seem to be a distinct animal from the

Arabian horse, such as I have seen in the plains of Arabia Deserta, south of Palmyra and Damascus, where I take the most excellent of the Arabian breed to be, in the tribes of Mowalli and Annecy, which is about lat. 36°; whilst Dongola and the dry country near it seem to be the center of excellence for this nobler animal; so that the bounds within which the horse is in its greatest perfection, seem to be between the degrees of lat. 20° and 36°, and between long. 30° east from the meridian of Greenwich to the banks of the Euphrates. For this extent Fahrenheit's thermometer is never below 50° in the night, or in the day below 80°, though it may rise to 120° at noon in the shade, at which point horses are not affected by the heat, but will breed as they do at Halfaia, Gerri, and Dongola, where the thermometer rises to these degrees. These countries, from what has been said, must of course be a dry, sandy desert, with little water, producing short, or no grass, but only roots, which are blanched like our cellery, being always covered with earth, having no marshes or swamps, fat soapy earth, or mould.

I never heard of wild horses in any of these parts. Arabia Deserta, where they are said to be, seems very ill calculated to conceal them, it being flat without wood or cover: they must therefore be constantly in view; and I never heard any person of veracity say they ever saw wild horses in Arabia. Wild asses I have frequently seen alive, but never dead, in neck, head, face, and tail very like ours, only their skins are streaked, not spotted. The zebra is found nowhere in Abyssinia, but in the S. W. extremity of Kuara among the Shangalla and Guba, in Narea and Caffa, and in the mountains of Dyre and Tegla, and to the southward near as far as the Cape.

What figure the Nubian breed of horses would make in point of fleetness is very doubtful, their make

being so entirely different from that of the Arabian; but if beautiful and symmetrical parts, great size and strength, the most agile, nervous, and elastic movements, great endurance of fatigue, docility of temper, and seeming attachment to man beyond any other domestic animal, can promise any thing for a stallion, the Nubian is, above all comparison, the most eligible in the world. Few men have seen more horses, or more of the different places where they are excellent, than I have, and no one ever more delighted in them, as far as the manly exercise went. What these may produce for the turf is what I cannot so much as guess; as there is not, I believe, in the world, one more indifferent to, or ignorant of, that amusement than I am. The experiment would be worth trying in any view. The expence would not be great, yet there might be some trouble and application necessary, but, if adroitly managed, not much even of that.

I could not refrain from attempting a drawing of one of them, which I since, and but very lately, unfortunately mislaid. It was a horse of Shekh Adelan, which, with some difficulty, I had liberty to draw. It was not quite four years old, was full 16 hands high: I mean this only as an idea; I know the faults of my drawing, and could correct many of them; but it is a rule I have invariably adhered to in this, as well as in description, to correct nothing from recollection when the object is out of my sight. This horse's name was El Fudda, the meaning of which I will not pretend to explain. In Egypt this is the name of a small piece of money clipped into points, otherwise called a parat; but, very probably, the name of horses in Nubia may have as little allusion to the quality of the animal as the name which our race-horses have in England; they are, however, very jealous in keeping up their pedigree. All noble horses

in Nubia are said to be descended of one of the five upon which Mahomet and his four immediate successors, Abou Becr, Omar, Atman, and Ali, fled from Mecca to Medina, the night of the Hegira. From which of these El Fudda was descended I did not inquire; Shekh Adelan, armed, as he fought, with his coat-of-mail and war-saddle, iron-chained bridle, brass cheek-plates, front-plate, breast-plate, large broad-sword, and battle-axe, did not weigh less upon the horse than 26 stone, horseman's weight. This horse kneeled to receive his master, armed as he was, when he mounted, and he kneeled to let him dismount armed likewise, so that no advantage could be taken of him in those helpless times when a man is obliged to arm and disarm himself piece by piece on horseback. Adelan, in war, was a fair player, and gave every body his chance. He was the first man always that entered among the enemy, and the last to leave them, and never changed this horse. The horses of Halfaia and Gerri do not arrive at the size of those in Dongola, where few are lower than 16 hands. They are black or white, but a vast proportion of the former to the latter. I never saw the colour we call grey, that is, dappled, but there are some bright bays, or inclining to sorrel. They are all kept monstrously fat upon dora, eat nothing green but the short roots of grass that are to be found by the side of the Nile, after the sun has withered it. This they dig out where it is covered with earth, and appears blanched, which they lay in small heaps once a-day on the ground before them. They are tethered by the fetlock joint of the fore-leg with a very soft cotton rope made with a loop and large button. They eat and drink with the bridle in their mouth, not the bridle they actually use when armed, but a light one made on purpose to accustom them to eat and drink with it. If you ask the reason,

they tell you of many battles that have been lost by the troops having been attacked by their enemy when taking off the bridles to give their horses drink. No Arab ever mounts a stallion; on the contrary, in Nubia they never ride mares: the reason is plain: The Arabs are constantly at war with their neighbours (for so robbery in that country is called), and always endeavour to take their enemies by surprise in the grey of the evening, or the dawn of day. A stallion no sooner smells the stale of the mare in the enemy's quarters, than he begins to neigh, and that would give the alarm to the party intended to be surprised. No such thing ever can happen when they ride mares only. On the contrary, the Funge trust only to superior force. They are in an open, plain country, must be discovered at many miles distance, and all such surprises and stratagems are useless to them.

The place where we alighted is called Hajar el Dill, and is a mile east from where we halted in the wood to feed our camels. We continued along the Nile at about a mile's distance from it, and, after advancing near three miles, came in sight of a large village called Derreira; on the opposite side of the Nile, and beyond that, about four miles on the same side, is Delab, a large village, with the shrine of a famous saint of that name. The country here is more cultivated and pleasant than that which we had passed; there is a low ridge of hills in the way. At half past six in the evening of the 2d of October we arrived at Wed Baal a Nagga. The village is a very large one, belonging to a Fakir, a saint of the first consideration in the government of Chendi. All this country, except immediately upon the Nile, is desert and sandy. All along the plain we saw numbers of people digging pits, and taking out the earth, which they boil in large earthen vases or pans. This is the only way they procure

themselves salt, of which they send great quantities to Halfaia, where is a market, and from whence it is sent to Sennaar.

On the 3d, at five o'clock, we left Wed Baal a Nagga, and continued along the Nile, which is about a quarter of a mile off; and seven miles further to the N. E. we passed a tomb of the Fakir el Deragi, close to the road on our left hand. All from Wed Baal a Nagga, on both sides of the Nile, is picturesque and pleasant, full of verdure, and varied with houses in different situations, till we come to the tomb of this Fakir. Immediately from this all is bare and desolate, except one verdant spot by the side of the river, shaded with fine trees, and full of herbage, and there we alighted at nine o'clock. This place is called Maia; a few trees appear on the other side, but beyond these all the country is desert. It is inhabited at present by the Jaheleen Arabs of Wed el Faal; as they have had violent showers in the high country, and their pools were still full of water, they staid by them longer than ordinary, feeding their cattle. Idris Wed el Faal, governor of Chendi, nephew to Wed Ageeb, and son to Sittina his sister, to whom this country belongs, was then with them, so we did not fear them, otherwise there is not a worse set of fanatical wretches, or greater enemies to the name of Christian, than these are.

As we are here speaking of Arabs and their names, I shall once for all observe, that Wed, a word which I have frequently made use of in the course of this history, and which in this sense is peculiar to the kingdom of Sennaar, does not mean river, though that is its import in Arabic. Here it is an abbreviation of Welled, peculiar to the inhabitants of this part of Atbara, who seem to have an aversion to the letter *l*; Wed el Faal, the son of Faal; Wed Hydar, the son of Hydar, or *the lion*; Wed Hassan, the son of Hassan,

and so of the rest. For the same reason, Melek Sennaar, the king of Sennaar, called *Mek*, by throwing out the *l*; Abd el Mek, the slave of the king, instead of Abd el Melek. Here also I had the pleasure to find the language of the Koran that of the whole people in common conversation; and as this was the book in which I first studied the Arabic, I found now a propriety and facility of expression I had not been sensible of before; for that of the Koran, in Arabia, is a kind of dead language, rarely understood but by men of learning *.

At Wed Baal a Nagga there is a ferry for those who go to Dongola by the desert of Bahiouda. Derreira is the landing-place on the other side; I suppose it is to avoid these Jaheleen that caravans ferry over at Gerri rather than come so low as Wed Baal a Nagga. We left Maia at half past three in the afternoon, and, after going three miles, we came to Gooz, a small village on our left, where we found plenty of good food for our camels. At six we alighted at Fakari. Chendi was now five miles east of us, where we arrived at eight o'clock in the morning of the 4th of October.

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* This is a singular fact, and confirms the assertion commonly made, that language does not change so rapidly in a barbarous as in a civilized country. The manners of the desert cannot undergo any great revolution; and, as ideas are not increased, no new words are required. The dialect of the Koran was that of the inhabitants of Mecca and its territory, and of the Jehaina, who dwelt near Jidda, the port of Mecca, but afterwards emigrated to the other side of the Red Sea, where Mr Bruce found them. The descent and proverbial veracity of that tribe are mentioned by Pococke, Spec. Hist. Arab. in the notes, p. 41. It must not, however, be imagined, that the modern dialects of the Arabic are radically different from the ancient language. On the contrary, the words of the book of Job and a modern Arabic letter are as nearly related as those of the modern Dutch to the Anglo-Saxon.—E.

CHAP. XI.

Reception at Chendi by Sittina—Conversation with her—Enter the Desert—Pillars of moving Sand—The Simoom—Latitude of Chiggre.

CHENDI, or Chandi, is a large village, the capital of its district, the government of which belongs to Sittina (as she is called), which signifies the Mistress, or the Lady, she being sister to Wed Ageeb, the principal of the Arabs in this country. She had been married, but her husband was dead. She had one son, Idris, Wed el Faal, who was to succeed to the government of Chendi upon his mother's death, and who, in effect, governed all the affairs of his kindred already. The governor of Chendi is called, in discourse, Mek el Jaheleen, prince of the Arabs of Beni Koreish, who are all settled, as I have already said, about the bottom of Atbara, on both sides of the Magiran *.

There is a tradition at Chendi, that a woman, whose name was Hendaque, once governed all that country, whence we might imagine that this was part of the kingdom of Candace; for writing this name in Greek letters it will come to be no other than Hendaque, the native, or mistress, of Chendi, or Chandi. However this may be, Chendi was once a town of great re-

* This accounts, along with what has been remarked, for the preservation of the dialect of Mahomet, during 1100 years.—E.

sort. The caravans of Sennaar, Egypt, Suakem, and Kordofan, all were in use to rendezvous here, especially since the Arabs have cut off the road by Dongola, and the desert of Bahiouda; and though it be not now a place of great plenty, yet every thing here is at a cheaper rate, and better than at Sennaar; we must except the article fuel, for wood is much dearer here than in any part of Atbara; the people all burn camel's dung. Indeed, were it not for dressing victuals, fire, in a place so hot as this, would be a nuisance. It was so sultry in the end of August and beginning of September, that many people dropt down dead with heat, both in the town and villages round it; but it is now said to be much cooler, though the thermometer at noon was once so high as 119°.

Chendi has in it about 250 houses, which are not all built contiguous, some of the best of them being separate, and that of Sittina is half a mile from the town. There are two or three tolerable houses, but the rest of them are miserable hovels, built of clay and reeds. Sittina gave us one of these houses, which I used for keeping my instruments and baggage from being pilfered, or broken; I slept abroad in the tent, and it was even there hot enough. The women of Chendi are esteemed the most beautiful in Atbara, and the men the greatest cowards. This is the character they bear among their countrymen, but we had little opportunity of verifying either.

On our arrival at Chendi we found the people very much alarmed at a phenomenon, which, though it often happens, by some strange inadvertency had never been observed, even in this serene sky. The planet Venus appeared shining with undiminished light all day, in defiance of the brightest sun, from which she was but little distant. Though this phenomenon be visible every four years, it filled all the people, both in town and

country, with alarm. They flocked to me in crowds from all quarters to be satisfied what it meant, and, when they saw my telescopes and quadrant, they could not be persuaded but that the star had become visible by some correspondence and intelligence with me, and for my use. The bulk of the people in all countries is the same; they never foretel any thing but evil. The very regular and natural appearance of this planet was immediately converted, therefore, into a sign that there would be a bad harvest next year, and scanty rains; that Abou Kalec, with an army, would depose the king, and over-run all Atbara; whilst some threatened me as a principal operator in bringing about these disasters. On the other hand, without seeming over-solicitous about my vindication, I insinuated among the better sort, that this was a lucky and favourable sign, a harbinger of good fortune, plenty, and peace. The clamour upon this subsided very much to my advantage; the rather, because Sittina and her son, Idris, knew certainly that Mahomet Abou Kalec was not to be in Atbara that year.

On the 12th of October I waited upon Sittina, who received me behind a screen, so that it was impossible either to see her figure, or face; I observed, however, that there were apertures so managed in the screen that she had a perfect view of me. She expressed herself with great politeness, talked much upon the terms in which Adelan was with the king, and wondered exceedingly how a white man, like me, should venture so far in such an ill-governed country. "Allow me, Madam," said I, "to complain of a breach of hospitality in you, which no Arab has been yet guilty of towards me." "Me!" said she, "that would be strange, indeed, to a man that bears my brother's letter. How can that be?" "Why, you tell

me, Madam, that I am a white man, by which I know that you see me, without giving me the like advantage. The queens of Sennaar did not use me so hardly; I had a full sight of them without having used any importunity." On this she broke out into a great fit of laughter; then fell into a conversation about medicines to make her hair grow, or rather to hinder it from falling off. She desired me to come to her the next day; that her son, Idris, would be then at home from the Howat *, and that he very much wished to see me. She that day sent us plenty of provisions from her own table.

On the 13th it was so excessively hot that it was impossible to suffer the burning sun. The poisonous simoom blew likewise as if it came from an oven. Our eyes were dim, our lips cracked, our knees tottering, our throats perfectly dry, and no relief was found from drinking an immoderate quantity of water. The people advised me to dip a sponge in vinegar and water, and hold it before my mouth and nose, and this greatly relieved me. In the evening I went to Sittina. Upon entering the house, a black slave laid hold of me by the hand, and placed me in a passage, at the end of which were two opposite doors. I did not well know the reason of this; but had staid only a few minutes when I heard one of the doors at the end of the passage open, and Sittina appeared magnificently dressed, with a kind of round cap of solid gold upon the crown of her head, all beat very thin, and hung round with sequins; with a variety of gold chains, solitaires, and necklaces of the same metal, about her neck. Her hair was plaited in ten or twelve small divisions like tails, which hung down below her waist, and over her

* The farm where he kept the flocks belonging to himself.

was thrown a common cotton white garment. She had a purple silk stole, or scarf, hung very gracefully upon her back, brought again round her waist, without covering her shoulders or arms. Upon her wrists she had two bracelets, like handcuffs, about half an inch thick, and two gold manacles of the same at her feet, fully an inch diameter, the most disagreeable and awkward part of all her dress. I expected she would have hurried through with some affectation of surprise. On the contrary, she stopt in the middle of the passage, saying, in a very grave manner, "Kif halec," (how are you?)—I thought this was an opportunity of kissing her hand, which I did, without her shewing any sort of reluctance. "Allow me as a physician," said I, "Madam, to say one word." She bowed with her head, and said, "Go in at that door, and I will hear you." The slave appeared, and carried me through a door at the bottom of the passage into a room, while her mistress vanished in at another door at the top, and there was the screen I had seen the day before, and the lady sitting behind it.

She was a woman scarcely forty, taller than the middle size, had a very round, plump face, her mouth rather large, very red lips, the finest teeth and eyes I have seen, but at the top of her nose, and between her eye-brows, she had a small speck made of cohol, or antimony, four-cornered, and of the size of the smallest patches our women used to wear; another rather longer upon the top of her nose, and one on the middle of her chin.

Sittina. "Tell me what you would say to me as a physician." *Ya.* "It was, Madam, but in consequence of your discourse yesterday. That heavy gold cap, with which you press your hair, will certainly be the cause of a great part of it falling off." *Sitt.* "I believe so; but I should catch cold, I am so accusto-

med to it, if I was to leave it off. Are you a man of name and family in your own country?" *Ya.* "Of both, madam." *Sitt.* "Are the women handsome there?" *Ya.* "The handsomest in the world, madam; but they are so good, and so excellent in all other respects, that nobody thinks at all of their beauty, nor do they value themselves upon it" *Sitt.* "And do they allow you to kiss their hands?" *Ya.* "I understand you, madam, though you have mistaken me. There is no familiarity in kissing hands; it is a mark of homage and distant respect paid in my country to our sovereigns, and to none earthly besides." *Sitt.* "O yes! but the kings." *Ya.* "Yes, and the queens, too, always on the knee, madam; I said our sovereigns, meaning both king and queen.—On her part it is a mark of gracious condescension, in favour of rank, merit, and honourable behaviour; it is a reward for dangerous and difficult services, above all other compensation." *Sitt.* "But do you know that no man ever kissed my hand but you?" *Ya.* "It is impossible I should know that, nor is it material.—Of this I am confident, it was meant respectfully, cannot hurt you, and ought not to offend you." *Sitt.* "It certainly has done neither, but I wish very much Idris, my son, would come and see you, as it is on his account I dressed myself to-day." *Ya.* "I hope, madam, when I do see him, he will think of some way of forwarding me safely to Barbar, in my way to Egypt." *Sitt.* "Safely! God forgive you! you are throwing yourself away wantonly. Idris himself, king of this country, dares not undertake such a journey. But why did not you go along with Mahomet Towash? He set out only a few days ago for Cairo, the same way you are going, and has, I believe, taken all the Hybeers with him. Go call the porter, says she to her slave. When the porter came, "Do you know if Mahomet

Towash is gone to Egypt?" "I know he is gone to Barbar," says the porter; "the two Mahomets, and Abd-el-Jeleel, the Bishareen, are with him." "Why did he take all the Hybeers?" says Sittina. "The men were tired and discouraged, answered the porter, by their late ill-usage from the Cubba-beesh, and, being stripped of every thing, they wanted to be at home." *Sitt.* "Somebody else will offer, but you must not go without a good man with you; I will not suffer you. These Bishareen are people known here, and may be trusted; but, while you stay, let me see you every day, and, if you want any thing, send by a servant of mine. It is a tax, I know, improperly laid upon a man like you, to ask for every necessary; but Idris will be here, and he will provide you better." I went away upon this conversation, and soon found, that Mahomet Towash had so well followed the direction of the Mek of Sennaar, as to take all the Hybeers of note with him on purpose to disappoint me.

This being the first time I have had occasion to mention this useful set of men, it will be necessary I should here explain their office and occupation. A Hybeer is a guide, from the Arabic word, Hubbar, to inform, instruct, or direct, because they are used to do this office to the caravans travelling through the desert in all its directions, whether to Egypt and back again, the coast of the Red Sea, or the countries of Sudan, and the western extremities of Africa. They are men of great consideration, knowing perfectly the situation and properties of all kinds of water to be met on the route, the distance of wells, whether occupied by enemies or not, and, if so, the way to avoid them with the least inconvenience. It is also necessary to them to know the places occupied by the simoom, and the seasons of their blowing in those parts of the desert; likewise those occupied by moving sands. He

generally belongs to some powerful tribe of Arabs inhabiting these deserts, whose protection he makes use of to assist his caravans, or protect them in time of danger, and handsome rewards were always in his power to distribute on such occasions; but now that the Arabs in these deserts are everywhere without government, the trade between Abyssinia and Cairo given over, that between Sudan and that metropolis much diminished, the importance of that office of Hybeer, and its consideration, is fallen in proportion, and with these the safe conduct; and we shall see presently a caravan cut off by the treachery of the very Hybeers that conducted them, the first instance of the kind that ever happened.

One day, sitting in my tent, musing upon the very unpromising aspect of my affairs, an Arab of very ordinary appearance, naked, with only a cotton cloth around his middle, came up to me, and offered to conduct me to Barbar, and thence to Egypt. He said his house was at Daroo on the side of the Nile, about twenty miles beyond Syene, or Assouan, nearer Cairo. I asked him why he had not gone with Mahomet Towash? He said, he did not like the company, and was very much mistaken if their journey ended well. Upon pressing him further if this was really the only reason; he then told me, that he had been sick for some months at Chendi, contracted debt, and had been obliged to pawn his clothes, and that his camel was detained for what still remained unpaid. After much conversation, repeated several days, I found that Idris (for that was his name) was a man of some substance in his own country, and had a daughter married to the Schourbatchie at Assouan. He said that this was his last journey, for he never would cross the desert again. A bargain was now soon made. I redeemed his camel and cloak; he was to shew me the

way to Egypt, and he was there to be recompensed, according to his behaviour.

Chendi, by repeated observations of the sun and stars, made for several succeeding days and nights, I found to be in lat. 16° 38′ 35″ north, and at the same place, the 13th of October, I observed an immersion of the first satellite of Jupiter, from which I concluded its longitude to be 33° 24′ 45″ east of the meridian of Greenwich. The highest degree of the thermometer of Fahrenheit in the shade was, on the 10th of October, at one o'clock, P. M. 119°, wind north; the lowest was on the 11th at midnight, 87°, wind west, after a small shower of rain.

I prepared now to leave Chendi, but first returned my benefactress, Sittina, thanks for all her favours.—She had called for Idris, and given him very positive instructions, mixed with threats, if he misbehaved; and hearing what I had done for him, she too gave him an ounce of gold, and said, at parting, that, for knowledge of the road through the desert, she believed Idris to be as perfect as any body; but, in case we met with the Bishareen they would neither shew to him nor to me any mercy. She gave me, however, a letter to Mahomet Abou Bertran, Shekh of one of the tribes of Bishareen, on the Tacazze, near the Magiran, which she made her son write from the Howat, it not being usual, she said, for her to write herself.—I begged I might be again allowed to testify my gratitude by kissing her hand, which she condescended to in the most gracious manner, laughing all the time, and saying, "Well, you are an odd man! if Idris, my son, saw me just now, he would think me mad."

On the 20th of October, in the evening, we left Chendi, and rested two miles from the town, and about a mile from the river; and next day, the 21st,

at three quarters past four in the morning we continued our journey, and passed through five or six villages of the Jaheleen on our left; at nine we alighted to feed our camels under some trees, having gone about ten miles. At this place begins a large island in the Nile several miles long, full of villages, trees, and corn; it is called Curgos. Opposite to this is the mountain Gibbainy, where is the first scene of ruins I have met with, since that of Axum in Abyssinia. We saw here heaps of broken pedestals, like those of Axum, all plainly designed for the statues of the dog; some pieces of obelisk, likewise, with hieroglyphics, almost totally obliterated. The Arabs told us these ruins were very extensive; and that many pieces of statues, both of men and animals, had been dug up there; the statues of the men were mostly of black stone. It is impossible to avoid risking a guess that this is the ancient city of Meroë, whose latitude should be 16 deg. 26 min.; and, I apprehend further, that in this island was the observatory of that famous cradle of astronomy. The Ethiopians cannot pronounce P; there is, indeed, no such letter in their alphabet. Curgos, then, the name of the island, should probably be Purgos, the tower, or observatory, of that city.

There are four remarkable rivers mentioned by the ancients as contributing to form the island of Meroë. The first is the Astusaspes, or the river Mareb, so called from hiding itself under ground in the sand, and again immerging in the time of rain, and running to join the Tacazze.

The next is the Tacazze, as I have said, the Siris of the ancients, by the natives called Astaboras, which forms, as Pliny has said, the left channel of Atbara, or, as the Greeks have called it, the island of Meroë,

On the west, or right hand, is another considerable river, called by the name of the White River, and by the ancients Astapus, and which Diodorus Siculus says comes from large lakes to the southward, which we know to be truth. This river throws itself into the Nile, and, together with it, makes the right-hand channel, inclosing Meroe, or Atbara. The Nile here is called the Blue River; and Nil, in the language of the country, has precisely that signification. This, too, was known to the ancients, as the Greeks have called it the Blue River, and these being all found to inclose Meroe, neither Gojam, nor any place that is not so limited, can ever be taken for that island.

I will not pretend to say that any positive proof should be founded upon the astronomical observations of the ancients, unless there are circumstances that go hand in hand with, and corroborate them; but we should be at a very great loss, indeed, notwithstanding all the diligence of modern travellers, were we to throw the celestial observations of the ancients entirely behind us. We have, from various concurring circumstances, fixed our Meroe at Gerri, or between that town and Wed Bal a Nagga, that is about lat. 16 deg. 10 min. north; and Ptolemy, from an observation of the Solstice, fixes it at 16 deg. 26 min. so that the error, if any, seems here to be of no consequence, as the direction of the city might extend to the northward. The observations mentioned by Pliny are not so accurate, nor do they merit to be put in competition with those of Ptolemy, for very obvious reasons; yet still when strictly examined, they do not fail, inaccurate as they are, to throw some light upon this subject. He says the sun is vertical at Meroe twice a year, once when he enters the 18° of Taurus, and again when he is in the 14th degree of the Lion.

Here are three impossibilities which plainly shew that this error is not that of Pliny, but of an ignorant transcriber; for if the Zenith of Meroe answered to the 18th degree of Taurus, it is impossible that the same point should answer to the 14th degree of the Lion; and if Syene was 5000 stadia from the one, it is impossible it could be no more from the other which was south of it, if they were all three under the same meridian; let us then confess, as we must, that both these observations are erroneous.

But let us suppose that the first will make the latitude of Meroe to be 17° 20′, and the second 16°, 40′; taking then a medium of these two bad observations, as is the practice in all such cases, we shall find the latitude of Meroe to be 16°, 30′ only four difference from the observation of Ptolemy.

Vossius *, among a multitude of errors he has committed relating to the Nile, denies that there are any islands in that river. The reader will be long ago satisfied from our history, that this is without foundation, seeing that from the island of Rhoda, where stands the Mikeas, to the island of Curgos, which we have just now mentioned, we have described several. He would, indeed, insinuate, that Meroe, or Atbara, is not an island, but a peninsula, though it is well known in history these words are constantly used as synonimous; but were it not so, Meroe scarcely stands in need of this excuse. If the reader will cast his eye upon the map, he will see two rivers, the Rahad and Tocoor, that almost meet in lat. 12° 40′ north. Across the peninsula, left by these rivers, is a small stripe, called Falaty, running in a contrary direction from the general course of rivers in this country, that is from east

* De orig. flum. cap. xvi. p. 57.

to west, though part of it in dry weather is hid in the sand, and this river makes Atbara a complete island in time of rain.

Simonides, the Less, staid five years in Meroë; after him, Aristocreon, Bion, and Basilis *. It is not then probable that men of their character omitted to ascertain the fact, whether or not the place where they lived was an island. Diodorus Siculus has said, that Meroë was in the form of a shield, that is, in the figure of that triangular shield, called Scutum, pointed at the bottom, and growing broader towards the top where it is square. Nothing can be more exact than this resemblance of the lower part of Atbara, that is, from Gerri to the Magiran, the part we suppose Diodorus was acquainted with; and it is scarcely possible that he could have fixed upon this resemblance without having seen some figure of it delineated upon paper.

As this must suppose a more than ordinary knowledge in Diodorus, we shall examine how the measures he has given us of the island correspond with the truth. He says, that the island is 3000 stadia long, and 1000 stadia broad. Now, taking 8 stadia for a mile, we have 375 miles, and measuring with the compass from the river Falaty, where, as I have said, Atbara becomes an island by the confluence of the rivers, I find that distance to be 345 miles, of 60 miles to a degree; so that without making any allowance for the disadvantages of the country, it is impossible at this day to have a more accurate estimation. As for the breadth, it is scarcely possible to guess at what part Diodorus means it was measured, on account of the figure of the shield, as I have already observed, as constantly varying. But, suppose, as is most pro-

* Plin. lib. vi. c. 30.

bable, that the breadth of the island was referred to the place where the city stood, then, in place of 125 miles, the produce of 1000 stadia, I find it measures 145 miles, a difference as little to be regarded as the other.

Let us now examine what information we can learn from the report of the centurions sent on purpose by Nero to explore this unknown country; whose report has been looked upon as decisive of the distances of places through which they passed.

These travellers pretend, that between Syene and the entrance into the island of Meroë was 873 miles, and from thence to the city 70 miles; the whole distance, then, between Syene and the city of Meroë will be 943 miles, or 15° 43′. Now Syene was very certainly in 24°, a few minutes more or less; and from this if we take 15°, there will remain 9° of latitude for the island of Meroë, according to the report of these centurions, and this would have carried Meroë far to the southward of the fountains of the Nile, and confounded every idea of the geography of Africa. The parallel which marks 11° cuts Gojam very exactly in the middle; and this peninsula may be said to resemble the shield called pelta, but very certainly not the scutum, to which Diodorus has very properly likened it. Besides, their own observation condemns them; for it is about Meroë where they first saw an appearance of verdure; the reason of which is very plain, if the latitude of that city was in 16°, upon the verge of the tropical rains, where, as an eye-witness, I, who have passed that dreary distance on foot can testify, those green herbs and shrubs, though they begin, as is very properly and cautiously expressed, to appear there, seem neither luxuriant nor abundant.

But had the centurions gone to Gojam, they would have passed a hundred miles of a more verdant and

more beautiful country before arriving there. The psittaci aves, or the paroquets, which they very properly observed were first seen in Meroë, that is, in Atbara, would have been sought for in vain in Gojam, a cold country; whereas the paroquet's delight is in the low, or hot country; where there is always variety of fruit; neither could Ptolemy's observation, nor those two just mentioned by Pliny, be admitted, after any sort of modification whatever.

Strabo remarks of the situation of Meroë, that it was placed upon the verge of the tropical rains; and, with his usual accuracy and good sense, he wonders the regularity of these tropical rains, as to their coming and duration, was not known earlier, when so many occasions had offered to observe them at Meroë before his time. The same author says, that the sun is vertical at Meroë 45 days before the summer solstice; so that this too will place that island in lat. 16° 44′, very little different from the latitude that Ptolemy gives it. From all which circumstances we may venture to maintain, that very few places in ancient geography have their situations more strictly defined, or by a greater variety of circumstances, than the island of Atbara or Meroe. But supposing the case were otherwise, there is not one of these circumstances that I know of, that could be adduced with any effect to prove Gojam to be Meroë, as Le Grande and the Jesuits have vainly asserted.

At half past eleven o'clock in the forenoon of the 21st of October, having spent the whole day in winding through vallies, and the bare hills of the Acaba, we alighted in a wood about a mile from the river. This side of the Nile, along which we travelled to-day, is quite bare, the other full of trees and corn, where are several large villages.

On the 22d, in the afternoon, we left this place,

which is called Hor-Gibbaity, and passed through several villages of the Macabrab, named Dow-Dowa, and three miles further came to Demar, a town belonging to Fakir Wed Madge Doub, who is a saint of the first consequence among the Jaheleen. They believe that he works miracles, and can strike whom he pleases with lameness, blindness, or madness; for which reason they stand very much in awe of him, so that he passes the caravans in safety through this nest of robbers, such as the Macabrab are, and always have been, though there are caravans who choose rather to pass unseen under the cloud of night, than trust to the veneration these Jaheleen may have of Wed Madge Doub's sanctity. After these are Eliab, their habitation four miles on our left at Howiah.

On the 25th, at three quarters past six in the morning, we left Demar; and at nine came to the Tacazze, five short miles distant from Demar, and two small villages built with canes and plastered with clay, called Dubba-beah; these are allies of the Macabrab, as coming from Demar. They took it in their heads to believe that we were a caravan going to Mecca, in which they were confirmed by a son of Wed Madge Doub, whom I brought with me; and it was neither my business nor inclination to undeceive them, but just the contrary.

The Tacazze is here about a quarter of a mile broad, exceedingly deep, and they have chosen the deepest part of the ferry. It is clear as in Abyssinia, where we had often seen it. It rises in the province of Angot, in about lat. 9 degrees, but has lost all the beauty of its banks, and runs here through a desert and barren country. I reflected with much satisfaction upon the many circumstances the sight of this river recalled to my mind; but still the greatest was, that the scenes of these were now far distant, and that I was by so

much the more advanced towards home. The water of the Tacazze is judged by the Arabs to be lighter, clearer, and wholesomer than that of the Nile. About half a mile after this ferry it joins with that river. Though the boats were smaller, the people more brutish and less expert than those at Halifoon, yet the supposed sanctity of our characters, and liberal payment, carried us over without any difficulty. These sons of Mahomet are very robust and strong, and, in all their operations, seemed to trust to that rather than to address or slight. We left the passage at a quarter after three, and at half past four arrived at a gravelly waste piece of ground, and all round it planted thick with large trees without fruit. The river is the boundary between Atbara and Barbar, in which province we now are. Its inhabitants are the Jaheleen of the tribe of Marifab.

On the 26th at six o'clock, leaving the Nile on our left about a mile, we continued our journey over gravel and sand, through a wood of acacia-trees, the colour of whose flowers was now changed to white, whereas all the rest we had before seen were yellow. At one o'clock we left the wood, and at 40 minutes past three we came to Gooz, a small village, which nevertheless is the capital of Barbar. The village of Gooz is a collection of miserable hovels composed of clay and canes. There are not in it above 30 houses, but there are six or seven different villages. The heat seemed here a little abated, but every body complained of a disease in their eyes they call Tishash, which often terminates in blindness. I apprehend it to be owing to the simoon and fine sand blowing through the desert. Here a misfortune happened to Idris, our Hybeer, who was arrested for debt, and carried to prison. As we were now upon the very edge of the desert, and to see no other inhabited place till we should reach E-

gypt, I was not displeased to have it in my power to lay him under one other obligation before we trusted our lives in his hands, which we were immediately to do. I therefore paid his debt, and reconciled him with his creditors, who, on their part, behaved very moderately to him.

When trade flourished here, and the caravans went regularly, Gooz was of some consideration, as being the first place where they stopped, and therefore got the first offer of the market; but now no commerce remains, nor is it worth while for stated guides to wait there to conduct the caravans through the desert, as they did formerly. Gooz is situated fifteen miles from the junction of the two rivers, the Nile and Tacazze. By many observations of the sun and stars, and by a mean of these, I found it to be in lat. 17° 57′ 22″; and by an immersion of the first satellite of Jupiter, observed there the 5th of November, determined its longitude to be 34° 20′ 30″ east of the meridian of Greenwich. The greatest height of Fahrenheit's thermometer was, at Gooz, the 28th day of October, at noon, 111°.

Having received all the assurances possible from Idris that he would live and die with us, after having repeated the prayer of peace, we put on the best countenance possible, and committed ourselves to the desert. There were Ismael the Turk, two Greek servants besides Georgis, who was almost blind and useless; two Barbarins, who took care of the camels, Idris, and a young man, a relation of his, who joined him at Barbar, to return home; in all nine persons, eight only of whom were effective. We were all well-armed with blunderbusses, swords, pistols, and double-barrelled guns, except Idris and his lad, who had lances, the only arms they could use. Five or six naked wretches of the Tucorory joined us at the watering

place, much against my will; for I knew that we should probably be reduced to the disagreeable necessity of seeing them die with thirst before our eyes; or by assisting them, should any accident happen to our water, we ran a very great risk of perishing with them.

It was on the 9th of November, at noon, we left Gooz, and set out for the sakia, or watering-place, which is below a little village called Hassa. All the west side of the Nile is full of villages down to Takaki, but they are all Jaheleen, without government, and perpetually in rebellion. At half past three in the afternoon we came to the Nile to lay in our store of water. We filled four skins, which might contain altogether about a hogshead and a half. As for our food, it consisted in twenty-two large goat's skins stuffed with a powder of bread made of dora here at Gooz, on purpose for such expeditions. It is about the size and shape of a pancake, but thinner. Being much dried, rather than toasted at the fire, it is afterwards rubbed between the hands into a dust or powder, for the sake of package; and the goat's skin crammed as full as possible, and tied at the mouth with a leather thong. This bread has a sourish taste, which it imparts to the water when mingled with it, and swells to six times the space that it occupied when dry. A handful, as much as you could grasp, put into a bowl made of a gourd sawed in two, about twice the contents of a common tea-bason, was the quantity allowed to each man every day, morning and evening; and another such gourd of water divided, one half two hours before noon, the other about an hour after. Such were the regulations we all of us subscribed to; we had not camels for a greater provision. The Nile at Hassa runs at the foot of a mountain called Jibbel Ateshan, or the Mountain of Thirst; the men, emphatically

enough, considering that those who part from it, entering the desert, take there the first provisions against thirst, and there those that come to it from the desert first assuage theirs.

On the 11th, about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, we left Hassa. It required a whole day to fill our skins, and soak them well in the water, in order to make an experiment, which was of the greatest consequence of any one we ever made, whether these skins were water-tight or not. I had taken the greatest care while at Chendi to daub them well over with grease and tar, to secure their pores on the outside; but Idris told us this was not enough, and that soaking the inside with water, filling them choak-full, and tying their mouths as hard as possible, was the only way to be certain if they were water-tight without.

While the camels were loading, I bathed myself with infinite pleasure for a long half hour in the Nile; and thus took leave of my old acquaintance, very doubtful if we should ever meet again. We then turned our face to N. E. leaving the Nile, and entering into a bare desert of fixed gravel, without trees, and of a very disagreeable whitish colour, mixed with small pieces of white marble, and pebbles like alabaster. At a quarter past four we alighted in a spot of high bent grass, where we let our camels feed till eight o'clock, and at three quarters past ten we halted for the night in another patch of grass; the place is called Howeela. Jibbel Ateshan bore S. W. and by W. of us, the distance about seven miles. I inquired of Idris, if he knew, to point out to me, precisely, where Syene lay, and he shewed me without difficulty. I set it by the compass, and found it to be N. and by W. very near the exact bearing it turned out upon observation afterwards. He said, however, we should not keep this tract, but should be obliged to vary occasionally in

search of water, as we should find the wells in the desert empty or full.

On the 12th, at seven o clock in the morning, we quitted Howeela, continuing our journey through the desert in the same direction, that is, to the N E.; our reason was, to avoid as much as possible the meeting any Arab that could give intelligence of our being on our journey; for nothing was so easy for people, such as the Bishareen, to way-lay and cut us off at the well, where they would be sure we must of necessity pass. At twenty minutes past eight we came to Waadi el Haimer, where there are a few trees and some bent grass; for this is the meaning of the word Waadi in a desert. The Arabs, called Sumgar, are here on the west of us, by the river side. At half past twelve we alighted on a spot of grass. Takaki, from this distance, will be twenty-four miles, between the points N. W. and N. N. W. and from Takaki to Dongola ten short days journey, I suppose 180 miles at most. We are now in the territory of the Bishareen; but they were all retired to the mountains, a high even ridge, that is, something above two days distance from us, and runs parallel to our course, on the right hand of us, all the way into Egypt.

At half past eight we alighted in a sandy plain without trees or grass. Our camels, we found, were too heavily loaded, but we comforted ourselves that this fault would be mended every day by the use we made of our provisions; however, it was very much against them that they were obliged to pass this whole night without eating. This place is called Umboia. We left Umboia, still stretching farther into the desert, at N. E. At nine we saw a hill called Assero-baybe, with two pointed tops, N. of us, which may be about twelve or fourteen miles distant, perhaps more. This is the next Hybeer's mark, by which he directs his

course. On the east is Ebenaat, another sharp-pointed rock, about ten miles distant. All this day, and the evening before, our road had been through stoney, gravelly ground, without herb or tree. Large pieces of agate and jasper, mixt with many beautiful pieces of marble, appear everywhere on the ground.

At two o'clock in the afternoon we came to Waadi Amour, where we alighted, after we had gone six hours this day with great diligence. Waadi Amour has a few trees and shrubs, but scarce enough to afford any shade, or night's provision for our camels. Being now without fear of the Arabs who live upon the Nile, from which we were at a sufficient distance, we, with the same view to safety, declined approaching the mountains, but held our course nearly N. to a small spot of grass and white sand, called Assa-Nagga. Here our misfortunes began, from a circumstance we had not attended to. Our shoes, that had needed constant repair, were become at last absolutely useless, and the hard ground, from the time we passed Amour, had worn the skin off in several places, so that our feet were very much inflamed by the burning sand.

About a mile northwest of us is Hambily, a rock not considerable in size, but, from the plain country in which it is situated, has the appearance of a great tower or castle, and south of it two hillocks, or little hills. These are all land-marks of the utmost consequence to caravans in their journey, because they are too considerable in size to be covered at any time by the moving sands. At Assa-Nagga, Assiro baybe is square with us, and with the turn which the Nile takes eastward to Korti and Dongola. The Takaki are the people nearest us, west of Assa-Nagga, and Assero baybe upon the Nile. After these, when the Nile has turned E. and W. are the Chaigie, on both sides

of the river, on to Korti, where the territory called the kingdom of Dongola begins. As the Nile no longer remains on our left, but makes a remarkable turn, which has been much misrepresented in the maps, I put my quadrant in order, and by a medium of three observations, one of Procyon, one of Rigel, and one of the middle star of the belt of Orion, I found the latitude of Assa Nagga to be 19° 30′, which being on a parallel with the farthest point of the Nile northward, gives the latitude of that place where the river turns west by Korti towards Dongola, and this was of great service to me in fixing some other material points in my map.

On the 14th, at seven in the morning, we left Assa-Nagga, our course being due north. At one o'clock we alighted among some acacia-trees at Waadi el Halboub, having gone twenty-one miles. We were here at once surprised and terrified by a sight, surely one of the most magnificent in the world. In that vast expanse of desert, from W. and to N. W. of us, we saw a number of prodigious pillars of sand at different distances, at times moving with great celerity, at others stalking on with a majestic slowness; at intervals we thought they were coming in a very few minutes to overwhelm us; and small quantities of sand did actually more than once reach us. Again they would retreat so as to be almost out of sight, their tops reaching to the very clouds. There the tops often separated from the bodies; and these, once disjoined, dispersed in the air, and did not appear more. Sometimes they were broken near the middle, as if struck with a large cannon shot. About noon they began to advance with considerable swiftness upon us, the wind being very strong at north. Eleven of them ranged alongside of us about the distance of three miles. The greatest diameter of the largest ap-

peared to me at that distance as if it would measure ten feet. They retired from us with a wind at S. E. leaving an impression upon my mind to which I can give no name, though surely one ingredient in it was fear, with a considerable deal of wonder and astonishment. It was in vain to think of flying; the swiftest horse, or fastest sailing ship, could be of no use to carry us out of this danger, and the full persuasion of this rivetted me as if to the spot where I stood, and let the camels gain on me so much in my state of lameness, that it was with some difficulty I could overtake them.

The effect this stupendous sight had upon Idris was to set him to his prayers, indeed rather to his charms; for besides the names of God and Mahomet, all the rest of the words were mere gibberish and nonsense. This created a violent altercation between him and Ismael the Turk, who abused him for not praying in the words of the Koran, maintaining, with apparent great wisdom at the same time, that nobody had charms to stop these moving sands but the inhabitants of Arabia Deserta.

The Arabs, to whom this inhospitable spot belongs, are the Adelaia. They, too, are Jaheleen, or Arabs of Beni Koreish. They are said to be a harmless race, and to do no hurt to the caravans they meet; yet I very much doubt, had we fallen in with them, they would not have deserved the good name that was given them. We went very slowly to-day, our feet being sore and greatly swelled. The whole of our company were much disheartened, (except Idris) and imagined that they were advancing into whirlwinds of moving sand, from which they should never be able to extricate themselves; but before four o'clock in the afternoon these phantoms of the plain had all of

them fallen to the ground and disappeared. In the evening we came to Waadi Dimokea, where we passed the night, much disheartened, and our fear more increased, when we found, upon awaking in the morning, that one side was perfectly buried in the sand that the wind had blown above us in the night.

From this day, subordination, though not entirely ceased, was fast on the decline; all was discontent, murmuring, and fear. Our water was greatly diminished, and that terrible death by thirst began to stare us in the face, and this was owing in a great measure to our own imprudence. Ismael, who had been left centinel over the skins of water, had slept so soundly, that this had given an opportunity to a Tucorory to open one of the skins that had not been touched, and serve himself out of it at his own discretion. I suppose that, hearing somebody stir, and fearing detection, he had withdrawn himself as speedily as possible, without taking time to tie the mouth of the girba, which we found in the morning with scarce a quart of water in it.

On the 15th, at a quarter past seven in the morning, we left Waadi Dimokea, keeping a little to the westward of north, as far as I could judge, just upon the line of Syene. The same ridge of hills being on our right and left as yesterday, in the center of these appeared Del Aned. At twenty minutes past two o'clock in the afternoon we came to an opening in the ridge of rocks; the passage is about a mile broad, through which we continue till we alighted at the foot of the mountain Del Aned. The place is called Waadi Del Aned.

The same appearance of moving pillars of sand presented themselves to us this day, in form and disposition like those we had seen at Waadi Halboub, only

they seemed to be more in number, and less in size. They came several times in a direction close upon us; that is, I believe, within less than two miles. They began, immediately after sun-rise, like a thick wood, and almost darkened the sun: His rays shining through them for near an hour, gave them an appearance of pillars of fire. Our people now became desperate: The Greeks shrieked out, and said it was the day of judgment. Ismael pronounced it to be hell, and the Tucorories, that the world was on fire. I asked Idris if ever he had before seen such a sight? He said he had often seen them as terrible, though never worse; but what he feared most was that extreme redness in the air, which was a sure presage of the coming of the simoom. I begged and entreated Idris that he would not say one word of that in the hearing of the people, for they had already felt it at Imhanzara in their way from Ras el Feel to Teawa, and again at the Acaba of Gerri, before we came to Chendi, and they were already nearly distracted at the apprehension of finding it here.

At half past four o'clock in the afternoon we left Waadi Dell Aned, our course a little more to the westward than the direction of Syene. The sands which had disappeared yesterday scarcely shewed themselves at all this day, and at a great distance in the horizon. This was, however, a comfort but of short duration. I observed Idris took no part in it, but only warned me and the servants, that, upon the coming of the simoom, we should fall upon our faces, with our mouths upon the earth, so as not to partake of the outward air as long as we could hold our breath. We alighted at six o'clock at a small rock in the sandy ground, without trees or herbage, so that our camels fasted all that night. This place is called

Ras el Seah, or, by the Bishareen, El Mout, which signifies death, a name of bad omen.

On the 16th, at half past ten in the forenoon we left El Mout, standing in the direction close upon Syene. Our men, if not gay, were however in better spirits than I had seen them since we left Gooz. One of our Barbarins had even attempted a song; but Hagi Ismael very gravely reproved him, by telling him, that singing in such a situation was a tempting of Providence. There is, indeed, nothing more different than active and passive courage. Hagi Ismael would fight, but he had not strength of mind to suffer. At eleven o'clock, while we contemplated with great pleasure the rugged top of Chiggre, to which we were fast approaching, and where we were to solace ourselves with plenty of good water, Idris cried out, with a loud voice, Fall upon your faces, for here is the simoom! I saw from the S. E. a haze come, in colour like the purple part of the rainbow, but not so compressed or thick. It did not occupy twenty yards in breadth, and was about twelve feet high from the ground. It was a kind of blush upon the air, and it moved very rapidly, for I scarce could turn to fall upon the ground with my head to the northward, when I felt the heat of its current plainly upon my face. We all lay flat on the ground, as if dead, till Idris told us it was blown over. The meteor, or purple haze, which I saw, was indeed passed, but the light air that still blew was of heat to threaten suffocation. For my part, I found distinctly in my breast that I had imbibed a part of it, nor was I free of an asthmatic sensation till I had been some months in Italy, at the baths of Poretta, near two years afterwards.

An universal despondency had taken possession of our people. They ceased to speak to one another,

and when they did, it was in whispers, by which I easily guessed their discourse was not favourable to me, or else that they were increasing each others fears, by vain suggestions calculated to sink each others spirits still further, but from which no earthly good could possibly result. I called them together, and both reprimanded and exhorted them in the strongest manner I could; I bade them attend to me, who had nearly lost my voice by the simoom, and desired them to look at my face, so swelled as scarcely to permit me to see; my neck covered with blisters, my feet swelled and inflamed, and bleeding with many wounds. In answer to the lamentation that the water was exhausted, and that we were upon the point of dying with thirst, I ordered each man a gourd full of water more than he had the preceding day, and shewed them, at no great distance, the bare, black, and sharp point of the rock Chiggre, wherein was the well at which we were again to fill our girbas, and thereby banish the fear of dying by thirst in the desert. I believe I never was at any time more eloquent, and never had eloquence a more sudden effect. They all protested and declared their concern chiefly arose from the situation they saw me in; that they feared not death or hardship, provided I would submit a little to their direction in taking a proper care of myself. They entreated me to use one of the camels, and throw off the load that it carried, that it would ease me of the wounds in my feet, by riding at least part of the day. This I positively refused to do, but recommended to them to be strong of heart, and to spare the camels for the last resource, if any should be taken ill and unable to walk any longer.

This phænomenon of the simoom, unexpected by us, though foreseen by Idris, caused us all to relapse into our former despondency. It still continued to blow,

so as to exhaust us entirely, though the blast was so weak as scarcely would have raised a leaf from the ground. At twenty minutes before five the simoom ceased, and a comfortable and cooling breeze came by starts from the north, blowing five or six minutes at a time, and then falling calm. We were now come to the Acaba, the ascent before we arrived at Chiggre, where we intended to have stopt that night, but we all moved on with tacit consent, nor did one person pretend to say how far he guessed we were to go.

At thirteen minutes past eight we alighted in a sandy plain, absolutely without herbage, covered with loose stones, a quarter of a mile due north of the well, which is in the narrow gorge, forming the southern outlet of this small plain. Though we had travelled thirteen hours and a quarter this day, it was but at a slow pace, our camels being famished, as well as tired, and lamed likewise by the sharp stones with which the ground in all places was covered. The country, for three days past, had been destitute of herbage of any kind, entirely desert, and abandoned to moving sands. We saw this day after passing Ras el Seah, large blocks and strata of pure white marble, equal to any in colour that ever came from Paros.

Chiggre is a small narrow valley, closely covered up and surrounded with barren rocks. The wells are ten in number, and the narrow gorge which opens to them is not ten yards broad. The springs, however, are very abundant. Wherever a pit is dug five or six feet deep, it is immediately filled with water. The principal pool is about forty yards square and five feet deep; but the best tasted water was in the cleft of a rock, about 30 yards higher, on the west side of this narrow outlet. All the water, however, was very

foul, with a number of animals both aquatic and land. It was impossible to drink without putting a piece of our cotton girdle over our mouths, to keep, by filtration, the filth of dead animals out of it. We saw a great many partridges upon the face of the bare rock; but what they fed upon I could not guess, unless upon insects. We did not dare to shoot at them, for fear of being heard by the wandering Arabs that might be somewhere in the neighbourhood; for Chiggre is a haunt of the Bishareen of the tribe of Abou Bertran, who, though they do not make it a station, because there is no pasture in the neighbourhood, nor can any thing grow there, yet it is one of the most valuable places of refreshment, on account of the great quantity of water, being nearly half way, when they drive their cattle from the borders of the Red Sea to the banks of the Nile; as also in their expeditions from south to north, when they leave their encampments in Barbar, to rob the Ababde Arabs on the frontiers of Egypt.

Our first attention was to our camels, to whom we gave that day a double feed of dora, that they might drink for the rest of our journey, should the wells in the way prove scant of water. We then washed in a large pool, the coldest water, I think, I ever felt, on account of its being in a cave covered with rock, and was inaccessible to the sun in any direction. All my people seemed to be greatly recovered by this refrigeration, but from some cause or other, it fared otherwise with the Tucorory; one of whom died about an hour after our arrival, and another early the next morning.

Subordination, if now not entirely gone, was expiring, so that I scarcely expected to have interest enough with my own servants to help me to set up my large quadrant: Yet I was exceedingly curious to

know the situation of this remarkable place, which Idris the Hybeer declared to be half way to Assouan. But it seems their curiosity was not less than mine; above all, they wanted to prove that Idris was mistaken, and that we were considerably nearer to Egypt than we were to Barbar. While Idris and the men filled the skins with water, the Greeks and I set up the quadrant, and, by observation of the two bright stars of Orion, I found the latitude of Chiggre to be 20° 58′ 30″ N.; so that, allowing even some small error in the position of Syene in the French maps, Idris's guess was very near the truth, and both the latitude and longitude of Chiggre and Syene seemed to require no further investigation.

During the whole time of the observation, an antelope, of a very large kind, went several times round and round the quadrant; and at the time when my eyes were fixed upon the star, came so near as to bite a part of my cotton cloth, which I had spread like a carpet to kneel on. Even when I stirred, it would leap about two or three yards from me, and then stand and gaze with such attention, that it would have appeared to by-standers (had there been any) that we had been a long time acquainted. The first idea was the common one, to kill it. I easily could have done this with a lance; but it seemed so interested in what I was doing, that I began to think it might perhaps be my good genius, which had come to visit, protect, and encourage me, in the desperate situation in which I then was.

CHAP. XII.

Distress in the Desert—Meet with Arabs—Camels die—Baggage abandoned—Come to Syene.

On the 17th of November, at half past ten in the forenoon, we left the valley and pool of Chiggre. Ismael and Georgis the blind Greek, had complained of shivering all night, and I began to be very apprehensive some violent fever was to follow. Their perspiration had not returned but in small quantity ever since their coming out of the water, and the night had been excessively cold, the thermometer standing at 63°. The day, however, was insufferably hot, and their complaints insensibly wore off, to my great comfort. A little before eleven we were again terrified by an army (as it seemed) of sand pillars, whose march was constantly south, and the favourite field which they occupied was that great circular space which the Nile makes when opposite to Assa Nagga, where it turns west to Korti and Dongola. At one time a number of these pillars faced to the eastward, and seemed to be coming directly upon us; but, though they were little nearer us than two miles, a considerable quantity of sand fell round us. I began now to be somewhat reconciled to this phænomenon, seeing it had hitherto done us no harm. The great magnificence it exhibited in its appearance,

seemed, in some measure, to indemnify us for the panic it had first occasioned: But it was otherwise with the simoon; we all of us were firmly persuaded that another passage of the purple meteor over us would be attended with our deaths.

At half past four we alighted in a vast plain, bounded on all sides by low sandy hills, which seemed to have been transported hither lately. These hillocks were from seven to thirteen feet high, drawn into perfect cones, with very sharp points, and well-proportioned bases. The sand was of an inconceivable fineness, having been the sport of hot winds for thousands of years. There could be no doubt that the day before, when it was calm, and we suffered so much by the simoon between El Mout and Chiggre, the wind had been raising pillars of sand in this place, called Umdoom; marks of the whirling motion of the pillars were distinctly seen in every heap, so that here again, while we were repining at the simoom, Providence was busied keeping us out of the way of another scene, where, if we had advanced a day, we had all of us been involved in inevitable destruction.

On the 18th we left Umdoom at seven in the morning, our direction N. a little inclined to W.; at nine o'clock we passed through a sandy plain, without trees or verdure. About 300 yards out of our way, to the left, among some sandy hillocks, where the ground seems to be more elevated than the rest, Idris the Hybeer told me, that one of the largest caravans which ever came out of Egypt, under the conduct of the Ababde and Bishareen Arabs, was there covered with sand, to the number of some thousands of camels. There are large rocks of grey granite scattered through this plain. At ten o'clock we alighted at a place called Erboygi, where are some trees, to feed our camels. The trees, I have so often mentioned in our journey through the desert, are not timber, or tall-growing

trees; there are none of these north of Sennaar, except a few at Chendi. The trees I speak of, which the camels eat, are a kind of dwarf acacia, growing only to the height of bushes; and the wood spoken of likewise is only of the desert kind, ate almost bare by the camels. There are some high trees, indeed, on the banks of the Nile. At half past one o'clock we left Erboygi, and came to a large wood of doom (Palma cuciofera). Here, for the first time, we saw a shrub, which very much resembled Spanish broom. The whole ground is dead sand, with some rocks of reddish granite. Exactly at five o'clock we alighted in the wood, after having travelled a moderate pace. The place is called El Cowie, and is a station of the Bishareen in the summer months; but these people were now east of us, three days journey, towards the Red Sea, where the rains had fallen, and there was plenty of pasture. At forty minutes past twelve, we left El Cowie, and at five o'clock in the evening alighted in a wood, called Terfowey, full of trees and grass. The trees are the tallest and largest we had seen since leaving the Nile. We had this day enjoyed, as it were, a holiday, free from the terrors of the sand, or dreadful influence of the simoom. This poisonous wind had made several attempts to prevail this day, but was always overpowered by a cool breeze at N.

On the 19th we left the west end of the wood, or rather continued the whole length of it, and at a quarter past eight in the evening arrived at the well. It is about four fathoms deep, but the spring not very abundant. We drained it several times, and were obliged to wait its filling again. These last two days, since we were at El Cowie, we had seen more verdure than we had altogether since we left Barbar. Here, particularly at Terfowey, the acacia trees are tall and verdant, but the mountains on each side appear black and barren beyond imagination.

As soon as we alighted at Terfowey, and had chosen a proper place where our camels could feed, we unloaded our baggage near them, and sent the men to clean the well, and wait the filling of the skins. We had lighted a large fire. The nights were excessively cold, though the thermometer was at 53°; and that cold occasioned me inexpressible pain in my feet, now swelled to a monstrous size, and everywhere inflamed and excoriated. I had taken upon me the charge of the baggage, and Mahomet, Idris's young man, the care of the camels; but he too was gone to the well, though expected to return immediately.

A doubt had arisen in my mind by the way, which was then giving me great uneasiness. If Syene is under the same meridian with Alexandria (for so Eratosthenes conceived when he attempted to measure the circumference of the earth), in this case Alexandria being supposed to lie in long. 30°, Syene must be in 30° likewise; but Gooz being in 34°, it is impossible that Syene can be within a trifle north of Gooz; and therefore we must have a greater quantity of westing to travel than Idris, the Hybeer, imagines, who places Syene a very little west of the meridian of Gooz, or immediately under the same meridian, and due north from it.

Our camels were always chained by the feet, and the chain secured by a padlock, lest they should wander in the night, or be liable to be stolen and carried off. Musing then upon the geographical difficulties just mentioned, and gazing before me, without any particular intention or suspicion, I heard the chain of the camels clink, as if somebody was unloosing them, and then, at the end of the gleam made by the fire, I saw distinctly a man pass swiftly by, stooping as he went along, his face almost to the ground. A little time after this I heard another clink of the chain, as

if from a pretty sharp blow, and immediately after a movement among the camels. I then rose, and cried in a threatening tone, in Arabic, "I charge you on your life, whoever you are, either come up to me directly, or keep at a distance till day, but come that way no more; why should you throw your life away?" In a minute after, he repassed in the shade among the trees, pretty much in the manner he had done before. As I was on guard between the baggage and the camels, I was consequently armed, and advanced deliberately some steps, as far as the light of the fire shone, on purpose to discover how many they were, and was ready to fire upon the next I saw. "If you are an honest man," cried I aloud, "and want any thing, come up to the fire and fear not, I am alone; but if you approach the camels or the baggage again, the world will not be able to save your life, and your blood be upon your own head." Mahomet, Idris's nephew, who heard me cry, came running up from the well to see what was the matter. We went down together to where the camels were, and, upon examination, found that the links of one of the chains had been broke, but the opening not large enough to let the corresponding whole link through, to separate it. A hard blue stone was driven through a link of one of the chains of another camel, and left sticking there, the chain not being entirely broken through; we saw, besides, the print of a man's feet on the sand. There was no need to tell us after this that we were not to sleep that night; we made therefore another fire on the other side of the camels with branches of the acacia-tree, which we gathered. I then sent the man back to Idris at the well, desiring him to fill his skins with water before it was light, and transport them to the baggage where I was, and to be all ready armed there by the dawn of day; soon after which, if the

Arabs were sufficiently strong, we were very certain they would attack us. This agreed perfectly with Idris's ideas also, so that, contenting themselves with a lesser quantity of water than they first intended to have taken, they lifted the skins upon the camels I sent them, and were at the rendezvous near the baggage, a little after four in the morning.

The Barbarins, and, in general, all the lower sort of Moors and Turks, adorn their arms and wrists with amulets; these are charms, and are some favourite verse of the Koran wrapt in paper, neatly covered with Turkey leather. The two Barbarins that were with me had procured for themselves new ones at Sennaar, which were to defend them from the simoom and the sand, and all the dangers of the desert. That they might not soil these in filling the water, they had taken them from their arms, and laid them on the brink of the well before they went down. Upon looking for these after the girbas were filled, they were not to be found. This double attempt was an indication of a number of people in the neighbourhood, in which case our present situation was one of the most desperate that could be figured. We were in the middle of the most barren, inhospitable desert in the world, and it was with the utmost difficulty that, from day to day, we could carry wherewithal to assuage our thirst. We had with us the only bread it was possible to procure for some hundred miles; lances and swords were not necessary to destroy us; the bursting or tearing of a girba, the lameness or death of a camel, a thorn or sprain in the foot, which might disable us from walking, were as certain death to us as a shot from a cannon. There was no staying for one another; to lose time was to die, because, with the utmost exertion our camels could make, we

scarce could carry along with us a scanty provision of bread and water sufficient to keep us alive.

That desert, which did not afford inhabitants for the assistance or relief of travellers, had greatly more than sufficient for destroying them. Large tribes of Arabs, two or three thousand, encamped together, were cantoned, as it were, in different places of this desert, where there was water enough to serve their numerous herds of cattle, and these, as their occasion required, traversed in parties all that wide expanse of solitude, from the mountains near the Red Sea east, to the banks of the Nile on the west, according as their several designs or necessities required. These were Jaheleen Arabs, those cruel, barbarous fanatics, that deliberately shed so much blood during the time they were establishing the Mahometan religion. Their prejudices had never been removed by any mixture of strangers, or softened by society, even with their own nation after they were polished; but buried, as it were, in these wild deserts, if they were not grown more savage, they had at least preserved, in their full vigour, those murdering principles which they had brought with them into that country, under the brutal and inhuman butcher, Kaled Ibn el Waalid, impiously called *The Sword of God.* If it should be our lot to fall among these people, and it was next to a certainty that we were at that very instant surrounded by them, death was certain, and our only comfort was, that we could die but once, and that to die like men was in our own option. Indeed, beside considering the bloody character which these wretches naturally bear, there could be no reason for letting us live: We could be of no service to them as slaves; and to have sent us into Egypt, after having first rifled and destroyed our goods, could not be done by them but at a great expence, to which well-inclined people only

could have been induced from charity, and of that last virtue they had not even heard the name. Our only chance then remaining was, that their number might be so small, that, by our great superiority in fire-arms and in courage, we might turn the misfortune upon the aggressors, deprive them of their camels and means of carrying water, and leave them, scattered in the desert, to that death, which either they or we, without alternative, must suffer.

I explained myself to this purpose, briefly to the people, on which a great cry followed, "God is great! let them come!" Our arms were perfectly in order, and our old Turk Ismael seemed to move about and direct with the vigour of a young man. As we had no doubt they would be mounted on camels, so we placed ourselves a little within the edge of the trees. The embers of our two fires were in our front; our tents, baggage, and boxes on each side of us, between the opening of the trees; our camels and water behind us, the camels being chained together behind the water, and ropes at their heads, which were tied to trees. A skin of water, and two wooden bowls beside it, was left open for those that should need to drink. We had finished our breakfast before day-break, and I had given all the men directions to fire separately, not together, at the same set of people; and those who had the blunderbusses to fire where they saw a number of camels and men together, and especially at any camels they saw with girbas upon them, or where was the greatest confusion.

The day broke; no Arabs appeared; all was still. The danger which occurred to our minds then was, lest, if they were few, by tarrying we should give them time to send off messengers to bring assistance. I then took Ismael and two Barbarins along with me, to see who these neighbours of ours could be. We

soon traced in the sand the footsteps of the man who had been at our camels; and, following them behind the point of a rock, which seemed calculated for concealing thieves, we saw two ragged, old, dirty tents, pitched with grass cords.

The two Barbarins entered one of them, and found a naked woman there. Ismael and I ran briskly into the largest, where we saw a man and a woman, both perfectly naked, frightful, emaciated figures, not like the inhabitants of this world. The man was partly sitting on his hams; a child, seemingly of the age to suck, was on a rag at the corner, and the woman looked as if she wished to hide herself. I sprung forward upon the man, and, taking him by the hair of the head, pulled him upon his back on the floor, setting my foot upon his breast, and pointing my knife to his throat; I said to him sternly, "If you mean to pray, pray quickly, for you have but this moment to live." The fellow was so frightened, he scarce could beg us to spare his life; but the woman, as it afterwards appeared, the mother of the sucking child, did not seem to copy the passive disposition of her husband; she ran to the corner of the tent, where was an old lance, with which, I doubt not, she would have sufficiently distinguished herself, but it happened to be entangled with the cloth of the tent, and Ismael felled her to the ground with the butt-end of his blunderbuss, and wrested the lance from her. A violent howl was set up by the remaining woman, like the cries of those in torment. "Tie them," said I, "Ismael; keep them separate, and carry them to the baggage, till I settle accounts with this camel-stealer, and then you shall strike their three heads off, where they intended to leave us miserably to perish with hunger; but keep them separate." While the Barbarins were tying the woman, the one that was the

nurse of the child turned to her husband, and said, in a most mournful, despairing tone of voice, "Did I not tell you, you would never thrive, if you hurt that good man? did not I tell you this would happen for murdering the Aga?

Our people had come to see what had passed, and I sent the women away, ordering them to be kept separate, out of the hearing of one another, to judge if in their answers they did not prevaricate. The woman desired to have her child with her, which I granted. The little creature, instead of being frightened, crowed, and held out its little hands as it passed me. We fastened the Arab with the chain of the camels, and so far was well; but still we did not know how near the Bishareen might be, nor who these were, nor whether they had sent off any intelligence in the night. Until we were informed of this, our case was little mended. Upon the man's appearing, all my people declared, with one general voice, that no time was to be lost, but that they should all be put to death as soon as the camels were loaded, before we set out on our journey; and, indeed, at first view of the thing, self-preservation, the first law of nature, seemed strongly to require it. Hagi Ismael was so determined on the execution, that he was already seeking a knife sharper than his own. "We will stay, Hagi Ismael," said I, "till we see if this thief is a liar also. If he prevaricates in the answers he gives to my questions, you shall then cut his head off, and we will consign him with the lie in his mouth, soul and body to hell, to his master whom he serves." Ismael answered, "The truth is the truth; if he lies he can deserve no better."

The reader will easily understand the necessity of my speaking at that moment in terms not only unusual for a Christian, but even in any society or con-

versation; and if the ferocity and brutality of the discourse should shock any, especially my fair readers, they will remember, that these were intended for a good and humane purpose, to produce fear in those upon whom we had no other tie, and thereby extort a confession of the truth; which might answer two purposes, the saving the effusion of their blood, and providing for our own preservation. "You see," said I, placing the man upon his knees, "your time is short, the sword is now drawn which is to make an end of you; take time, answer distinctly and deliberately; for the first trip or lie that you make, is the last word that you will utter in this world. Your wife shall have her fair chance likewise, and your child; you and all shall go together, unless you tell me the naked truth. Here, Ismael, stand by him, and take my sword; it is, I believe, the sharpest in the company.

"Now I ask you, at your peril, who was the good man your wife reproached you with having murdered? where was it, and when, and who were your accomplices?" He answered trembling, and indistinctly, through fear, "It was a black, an Aga from Chendi." "Mahomet Towash," says Ismael; "Ullah Kerim! God is Merciful!" "The same," says the Bishareen. He then related the particulars of his death, in the manner which I shall have occasion to state afterwards. "Where are the Bishareen?" continued I; "where is Abou Bertran? how soon will a light camel and messenger arrive where he now is?" "In less than two days; perhaps," says he, "in a day and a half, if he is very diligent, and the camel good." "Take care," said I, "you are in danger. Where did you and your women come from, and when?" "From Abou Bertran," says he; "we ar-

rived here at noon on the 5th day *, but the camels were all she-camels; they are favourite camels of Sh·kh Seide; we drove them softly; the two you saw at the tents are lame; besides there were some others unsound; there were also women and children." "Where did that party and their camels go to from this? and what number of men was there with them?" "There were about three hundred camels of all sorts, and about thirty men, all of them servants; some of them had one lance, and some of them two; they had no shields or other arms." "What did you intend last night to do with my camels?" "I intended to have carried them, with the women and child, to join the party at the Nile." "What must have become of me in that case? we must have died?" He did not answer. "Take care," said I, "the thing is now over, and you are in my hands; take care what you say." "Why, certainly," says he, "you must have died, you could not live, you could not go any where else." "If another party had found us here, in that case would they have slain us?" He hesitated a little; then, as if he recollected himself, said, "Yes, surely, they murdered the Aga, and would murder any body that had not a Bishareen with them." A violent cry of condemnation immediately followed. "Now attend and understand me distinctly," said I; "for upon these two questions hangs your life: Do you know of any party of Bishareen who are soon to pass here, or any wells to the north, and in what number? and have you sent any intelligence, since last night you saw

* It is not here to be understood that the Arab described the day by the 5th, but by an interval of time which we knew corresponded to the 5th.

us here?" He answered, with more readiness than usual, "We have sent nobody anywhere; our camels are lame; we were to follow, as soon as they should be able to travel, to join those at the Nile. The parties of the Bisharèen are always passing here, sometimes more, sometimes less; they will not come till they hear from the Nile whether the grass is grown. They have with them two dromedaries, who will carry the news from the Nile in three days, or they will come in small parties like the last, for they have no fear in these parts. The wells to the north belong to the Ababde. When they pass by them with cattle, they are always in great numbers, and a Shekh along with them; but those wells are now so scanty, they have not water for any number, and they must therefore all pass this way."

I got up, and called on Ismael. The poor fellow thought he was to die. Life is sweet, even to the most miserable. He was still upon his knees, holding his hands clasped round the back of his neck, and already, I suppose, thought he felt the edge of Ismael's knife. He swore that every word he had spoken was truth; and if his wife was brought, she could not tell another story.

I thereupon left him, and went to his wife, who, when she saw Hagi Ismael with a drawn sword in his hand, thought all was over with her husband, and fell into a violent fit of despair, crying out, "That all the men were liars and murderers, but that she would have told the truth, if I had asked her first." "Then go, Hagi Ismael," said I, "tell them not to put him to death till I come; and now you have your chance, which if you do not improve by telling the truth, I will first slay your child with my own hand before your face, and then order you all to be cruelly put to death together." She began with great earnestness to

say, "She could not tell who killed Mahomet Towash, for she only heard it in conversation from her husband, who was there, after he had come home." I then, word for word, put those questions to her that I had done to her husband, and had precisely the same answers. The only difference was, that she believed a party of the Ababde would pass Chiggre soon; but seeing me rise to go away, she burst into a flood of tears, and tore her hair in the most violent excess of passion; shrieking out, to have mercy upon her, and pressing the little child to her breast, as if to take leave of it; then laying it down before me, in great agony and bitterness of heart, she again shrieked out, "If you are a Turk, make it a slave, but do not kill my child, and spare my husband."

Though I understood Arabic well, I did not, till that day, know it had such powers, or that it contained expressions at once so forcible and so simple. I found myself so much moved, and my tears came so fast, that it was in vain to endeavour to carry on a farce under such tragical appearances. "Woman," said I, "I am not a Turk, nor do I make slaves or kill children. It is your Arabs that force me to *this*; it was you that attacked me last night, it was you that murdered Mahomet Towash, one of your own religion, and busied in his duty. I am a stranger, seeking my own safety; but you are all murderers and thieves." "It is true," says she, "they are all murderers and liars, and my husband, not knowing, may have lied too. Only let me hear what he told you, and I will tell you whether it is truth or not." Day was now advancing apace, and no resolution taken, whilst our present situation was a very unsafe one. We carried the three prisoners bound, and set George, the Greek, centinel over them. I then called the people together.

I stated fairly, in a council held among ourselves, the horror of slaughtering the women and child, or even leaving them to starve with hunger, by killing their camels, from whom they got their only sustenance; for, though we should not stain our hands with their blood, it was the same thing to leave them to perish: that we were strangers, and had fallen upon them by accident, but they were in their own country. On the contrary, suppose we only slew the man, any of the women might mount a camel, and, travelling with diligence, might inform the Bishareen, who would send a party and cut us off at the next well, where we must pass, and where it would be impossible to escape them. I must say, there was a considerable majority for sparing the women and child, and not one but who willingly decreed the death of the man, who had confessed he was endeavouring to steal our camels, and that he intended to carry them to his party at the Nile; in which case the loss of all our lives was certain, as we should have been starved to death, or murdered by the Arabs.

The very recital of this attempt so enraged Hagi Ismael, that he desired he might have the preference in cutting off his head. The Barbarins, too, were angry for the loss of their bracelets. Indeed, every one's opinion was, that the Arab should die, and especially since the account of their behaviour to Mahomet Towash, whose death I, for my own part, cannot say I thought myself under any obligation to revenge. "Since you are differing in your opinions, and there is no time to lose," said I, "allow me to give you mine. It has appeared to me, that often since we began this journey, we have been preserved by visible instances of God's protection, when we should have lost our lives, if we had gone by the rules of our own judgment only. We are, it is true, of different religions,

but all worship the same God. Suppose the present case should be a trial, whether we trust really in God's protection, or whether we believe our safety owing to our own foresight and courage. If the man's life be now taken away, to-morrow we may meet the Bisharеen, and then we shall all reflect upon the folly of our precaution. For my own part, my constant creed is, that I am in God's hands, whether in the house or in the desert; and not in those of the Bishareen, or of any lawless spoiler. I have a clear conscience, and am engaged in no unlawful pursuit, seeking on foot my way home, feeding on bread and water, and have done, nor design, wrong to no man. We are well armed, are nine in number, and have twice as many firelocks, many of these with double barrels, and others of a size never before seen by Arabs, armies of whom have been defeated with fewer. We are ragged and tattered in our clothes, and no prize to any one; nor do I think we shall be found a party of pleasure, for any set of wild young men to leave their own homes, with javelins and lances, to way-lay us at the well for sport and diversion, since gain and profit are out of the question. But this I declare to you, if ever we meet these Arabs, if the ground is such as has been near all the wells we have come to, I will fight the Bishareen boldly and cheerfully, without a doubt of beating them with ease. I do not say my feelings would be the same if my conscience was loaded with that most heinous and horrid crime, murder in cold blood; and therefore my determination is to spare the life even of this man, and I will oppose his being put to death by every means in my power."

It was easy to see, that fear of their own lives only, and not cruelty, was the reason they sought that of the Arab. They answered me, two or three of them at once, "That it was all very well; what should they

do? should they give themselves up to the Bishareen, and be murdered like Mahomet Towash? was there any other way of escaping?" "I will tell you, then, since you ask me, what you should do: You shall follow the duty of self-defence and self-preservation, as far as you can do it without a crime. You shall leave the women and the child where they are, and with them the camels, to give them and their child milk; you shall chain the husband's right hand to the left of some of yours, and you shall each of you take him by turns, till we shall carry him into Egypt. Perhaps he knows the desert and the wells better than Idris; and if he should not, still we have two Hybeers instead of one; and who can foretell what may happen to Idris, more than to any other of us? But as he knows the stations of his people, and their courses at particular seasons, that day we meet one Bishareen, the man that is chained with him, and conducts him, shall instantly stab him to the heart, so that he shall not see, much less triumph in, the success of his treachery. On the contrary, if he is faithful, and informs Idris where the danger is, and where we are to avoid it, keeping us rather by scanty wells than abundant ones, on the day I arrive safely in Egypt, I will clothe him anew, as also his women, give him a good camel for himself, and a load of dora for them all. As for the camels we leave here, they are she ones, and necessary to give the women food. They are not lame, it is said; but we shall lame them in earnest, so that they shall not be able to carry a messenger to the Bishareen before they die with thirst in the way, both they and their riders, if they should attempt it."

An universal applause followed this speech; Idris, above all, declared his warmest approbation. The man and the women were sent for, and had their sentence repeated to them. They all subscribed to the

conditions cheerfully; and the woman declared she would as soon see her child die, as be an instrument of any harm befalling us, and that, if a thousand Bisharеen should pass, she knew how to mislead them all, and that none of them should follow us till we were far out of danger.

I sent two Barbarins to lame the camels effectually, but not so as to make them past recovery. After which, for the nurse and the child's sake, I took twelve handfuls of the bread which was our only food,—and indeed we could scarcely spare it, as we saw afterwards, —and left it to this miserable family, with this agreeable reflection, however, that we should be to them, in the end, a much greater blessing, than in the beginning, we had been an affliction, provided only they kept their faith, and on their part deserved it.

On the 20th at eleven o'clock, we left the well at Terfowey, after having warned the women, that their chance of seeing their husband again depended wholly upon his and their faithful conduct. We took our prisoner with us, his right hand being chained to the left of one of the Barbarins. We had no sooner got into the plain, than we felt great symptoms of the simoom; and about a quarter before twelve, our prisoner first, and then Idris, cried out, The simoom! the simoom! My curiosity would not suffer me to fall down without looking behind me. About due south, a little to the east, I saw the coloured haze as before. It seemed now to be rather less compressed, and to have with it a shade of blue. The edges of it were not defined as those of the former, but like a very thin smoke, with about a yard in the middle tinged with those colours. We all fell upon our faces, and the simoom passed with a gentle ruffling wind. It continued to blow in this manner till near three o'clock; so we were all taken ill that night, and

scarcely strength was left us to load the camels and arrange the baggage. This day one of our camels died, partly famished, partly overcome with extreme fatigue; so that, incapable as we were of labour, we were obliged, for self-preservation's sake, to cut off thin slices of the fleshy part of the camel, and hang it in so many thongs upon the trees all night, and after upon the baggage, the sun drying it immediately, so as to prevent putrefaction.

At half past eight in the evening we alighted at a well called Naibey, in a bare sandy plain, where there were a few straggling acacia trees. We had all this day seen large blocks of fossile salt upon the surface of the earth where we trod. This was the cause, I suppose, that both the spring at Terfowey, and now this of Naibey, were brackish to the taste, and especially that of Naibey. We found near the well the corpse of a man and two camels upon the ground. It was apparently long ago that this accident happened; for the moisture of the camel was so exhaled, that it seemed to weigh but a very few pounds; no vermin had touched it, as in this whole desert there is neither worm, fly, nor any thing that has the breath of life.

On the 21st, at six in the morning, having filled the girbas with water, we set out from Naibey, our direction due north, and, as we thought, in a course almost straight upon Syene. The first hour of our journey was through sharp-pointed rocks, which it was very easy to foresee would very soon finish our camels. About eight we had a view of the desert to the westward as before, and saw the sands had already begun to rise in immense twisted pillars, which darkened the heavens. The rising of these in the morning so early, we began now to observe, was a sure sign of a hot day, with a brisk wind at north; and that heat, and the early rising of the sands, was as sure a sign of its fall-

ing calm about mid-day, and its being followed by two hours of the poisonous wind. That last consideration was what made the greatest impression, for we had felt its effects; it had filled us with fear, and absorbed the last remnant of our strength; whereas the sand, though a destruction to us if it had involved us in its compass, had as yet done us no other harm than terrifying us in the first days we had seen it.

It was this day more magnificent than any we had as yet seen. The sun shining through the pillars, which were thicker, and contained more sand apparently than any of the preceding days, seemed to give those nearest us an appearance as if spotted with stars of gold. I do not think at any time they seemed to be nearer than two miles. The most remarkable circumstance was, that the sand seemed to keep in that vast circular space surrounded by the Nile on our left, in going round by Chaigie towards Dongola, and seldom was observed much to the eastward of a meridian, passing along the Nile through the Magiran, before it takes that turn: whereas the simoom was always on the opposite side of our course, coming upon us from the south east.

A little before twelve our wind at north ceased, and a considerable quantity of fine sand rained upon us for an hour afterwards. At the time it appeared, the description of this phenomenon, in Syphax's speech to Sempronius, was perpetually before my mind:—

> So, where our wide Numidian wastes extend,
> Sudden the impetuous hurricanes descend,
> Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
> Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.
> The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,
> Sees the dry desert all around him rise,
> And, smothered in the dusty whirlwind, dies.
>
> ADDISON.

These lines are capital, and are a fine copy, which can only appear tame by the original having been before our eyes, painted by the great master, the Creator and Ruler of the world.

The Simoom, with the wind at S. E., immediately follows the wind at N., and the usual despondency that always accompanied it. The blue meteor, with which it began, passed over us about twelve, and the ruffling wind that followed it continued till near two. Silence, and a desperate kind of indifference about life, were the immediate effect upon us; and I began now, seeing the condition of my camels, to fear we were all doomed to a sandy grave, and to contemplate it with some degree of resignation. At half past eight in the evening we alighted in a sandy flat, where there was great store of bent grass and trees, which had a considerable degree of verdure, a circumstance much in favour of our camels. We determined to stop here to give them an opportunity of eating their fill where they could find it.

On the 22d, at six o'clock, we set out from the sandy flat, and one of the Tucorory was seized with a frenzy or madness. At first I took it for a fit of the epilepsy, by the distortions of his face: but it was soon seen to be of a more serious nature. Whether he had been before afflicted with it I know not. I offered to bleed him, which he refused; neither, though we gave him water, would he drink, but very moderately. He rolled upon the ground, and moaned, often repeating two or three words which I did not understand. He refused to continue his journey, or rise from where he lay, so that we were obliged to leave him to his fortune. We went this day very diligently, not remarkably slow nor fast, but though our camels, as we thought, had fared well for these two nights, another

of them died about four o'clock this afternoon, when we came to Umarack.

I here began to provide for the worst. I saw the fate of our camels approaching, and that our men grew weak in proportion; our bread, too, began to fail us, although we had plenty of camel's flesh in its stead; our water, though in all appearance we were to find it more frequently than in the beginning of our journey, was nevertheless brackish, and scarcely served the purpose to quench our thirst; and, above all, the dreadful simoom had perfectly exhausted our strength, and brought upon us a degree of cowardice and languor that we struggled with in vain. I therefore, as the last effort, began to throw away every thing weighty I could spare, or that was not absolutely necessary, such as all shells, fossiles, minerals, and petrifactions, that I could get at, the counter-cases of my quadrant, telescopes, and clock, and several such like things.

Our camels were now reduced to five, and it did not seem that these were capable of continuing their journey much longer. In that case, no remedy remained, but that each man should carry his own water and provisions. Now, as no one man could carry the water he should use between well and well, and it was more than probable that distance would be doubled by some of the wells being found dry; and if that was not the case, yet, as it was impossible for a man to carry his provisions, who could not walk without any burden at all, our situation seemed to be most desperate.

The Bishareen alone seemed to keep up his strength, and was in excellent spirits. He had attached himself, in a particular manner, to me, and with a part of that very scanty rag, which he had round his waist, he had made a wrapper, very artificially, according to the manner his countrymen, the Bisha-

reen, practise on such occasions. This had greatly defended my feet in the day, but the pain occasioned by the cold in the night was really scarce sufferable. I offered to free him from the confinement of his left hand, which was chained to some one of the company night and day; but he very sensibly refused it, saying, "Unchain my hands when you load and unload your camels, I cannot then run away from you; for, though you did not shoot me, I should starve with hunger and thirst; but keep me to the end of the journey as you began with me; then I cannot misbehave, and lose the reward which you say you are to give me."

At forty minutes past three o'clock we saw large strata of fossile salt everywhere upon the surface of the ground. At five we found the body of Mahomet Towash, on the spot where he had been murdered, stript naked, and lying on his face unburied. The wound in the back-sinew of his leg was apparent; he was, besides, thrust through the back with a lance, and had two wounds in the head with swords. We followed some footsteps in the sand to the right, and there saw three other bodies, whom Idris knew to be his principal servants. These, it seemed, had taken to their arms upon the Aga's being first wounded, and the cowardly, treacherous Bishareens had persuaded them to capitulate, upon promise of giving them camels and provision to carry them into Egypt, after which they had murdered them behind these rocks.

At six o'clock we alighted at Umarack, so called from a number of rack-trees that grow there, and which seem to affect a saltish soil; at Raback and Masuah I had seen them growing in the sea. When I ordered a halt at Umarack, the general cry was, to travel all night, so that we might be at a distance from that dangerous unlucky spot. The sight of the men

murdered, and fear of the like fate, had got the better of their other sensations. In short, there was nothing more visible, than that their apprehensions were of two sorts, and produced very different operations.—The simoom, the stalking pillars of sand, and the probability of dying with thirst, or hunger, brought on a torpor, or indifference, that made them inactive; but the discovery of the Arab at Terfowey, the fear of meeting the Bishareen at the wells, and the dead bodies of the Aga and his unfortunate companions, produced a degree of activity and irritation that resembled very much their spirits being elevated by good news. I told them, that, of all the places in the desert through which they had passed, this was by far the safest; because fear of being met by the troops from Assouan, seeking the murderers of Mahomet Towash, would keep all the Bishareen at a distance. Our Arab said, that the next well belonged to the Ababde, and not the Bishareen, and that the Bishareen had slain the Aga there, to make men believe it had been done by the Ababde. Idris contributed his morsel of comfort, by assuring us, that the wells now, as far as Egypt, were so scanty of water, that no party above ten men would trust their provision to them, and none of us had the least apprehension from marauders of twice that number. The night at Umarack was excessively cold as to sensation; Fahrenheit's thermometer was, however, at 49° an hour before day-light.

On the 23d we left Umarack at six o'clock in the morning; our road this day being between mountains of blue stones of a very fine and perfect quality, through the heart of which ran thick veins of jasper, their strata perpendicular to the horizon. There were other mountains of marble of the colour called Isabella. In other places the rock seemed composed of petrified wood, such as we had seen in the mountains

near Cosseir. At a quarter past eleven, going due N. we entered a narrow valley, in which we passed two wells on our left; and following the windings through this valley, all of deep sand, we came to a large pool of excellent water, called Umgwat, sheltered from the rays of the sun by a large rock, which projected over it, the upper part of which was shaped like a wedge, and was composed all of green marble, without the smallest variety, or spot, of other colour in it.

Through this whole valley, to-day, we had seen the bodies of the Tucorory, who had followed Mahomet Towash, and been scattered by the Bishareen, and left to perish with thirst there. None of them, however, as far as we could observe, had ever reached this well. In the water we found a bird of the duck kind, called teal, or widgeon. The Turk Ismael was preparing to shoot at it with his blunderbuss, but I desired him to refrain, being willing, by its flight, to endeavour to judge something of the nearness of the Nile. We raised it, therefore, by sudden repeated cries, which method was likely to make it seek its home straight, and abandon a place it must have been a stranger to. The bird flew straight west, rising as he flew, a sure proof his journey was a long one, till at last, being very high and at a distance, he vanished from our sight, without descending, or seeking to approach the earth; from which I drew an unpleasant inference, that we were yet far from the Nile, as was really the case.

Here we threw away the brackish water that remained in our girbas, and filled them with the wholesome element drawn from this pool of Umgwat. I could not help reproaching Idris with the inaccuracy of the information he had pretended to give us the day

before, that no party above ten men could meet us at any of these wells, as none of them could supply water for more; whereas in this pool there was certainly enough of excellent water to serve a whole tribe of Arabs for a month. He had little to say, further than that Haimer, though near, was a scanty well, and perhaps we should not find water there at all. He trusted, however, if our people would take heart, we were out of all danger from Arabs, or any thing else.

At a quarter past three we left the well, and continued along a sandy valley, which is called Waadi Umgwat. This night it was told me, that Georgis, and the Turk Ismael, were both so ill, and so desponding, that they had resolved to pursue the journey no farther, but submit to their destiny, as they called it, and stay behind and die. It was with the utmost difficulty I could get them to lay aside this resolution; and the next morning I promised they should ride by turns upon one of the camels, a thing that none of us had yet attempted. They had, indeed, often desired me to do so, but I well knew, if I had set them that example, besides destroying the camels, it would have had the very worst effect upon their dastardly spirits; and, indeed, we very soon saw the bad effects of this humane consideration for the two invalids.

On the 24th, at half past six in the morning, we left Umgwat, following the windings of sandy vallies between stoney hills. At half past nine we found Mahomet Aga's horse dead. The poor creature seemed, without a guide, to have followed exactly enough the tract of the wells and way to Egypt, and had survived all his fellow travellers. At eleven o'clock we came to some plains of loose, moving sand, and saw some pillars in motion, which had not wind to sustain them

for any time, and which gave us, therefore, little concern. At one we alighted near the well Mour, which was to the N. E. of us. At four we left the well Mour: At forty minutes after four passed the well itself, which was then dry; and, at a quarter past six, we found a dead man, whose corpse was quite dry, and had been so a considerable time. At seven o'clock in the evening we alighted at El Haimer, where are the two wells in a large plain of sand. The water is good. There is another well to the west of us, but it is bitter and saltish, though more abundant than either of the other two, which, by filling our skins, we had several times drained.

On the 25th, at half past seven in the morning, we left the well el Haimer, and, at ten o'clock, alighted among some acacia trees; our camels having ate nothing all night, except the dry bitter roots of that drug, the senna. While we were attending the camels, and resting ourselves on the grass, we were surprised at the appearance of a troop of Arabs all upon camels, who looked like a caravan, each camel having a small loading behind him. They had two gentle ascents before they could arrive at the place where we were. The road is between two sandy hills, at the back of which our camels were feeding in a wood; and near the road was the well el Haimer, where our skins were lying full of water. It was necessary then to understand one another before we allowed them to pass between the sandy hills. Upon the first alarm, my people all repaired to me, bringing their arms in their hands, as well those that they carried upon them, as the spare arms, all of which were primed and charged.

The first question was, what to do with the Bishareen? None of us had any suspicion of him. We

unchained him from the Barbarin, and fastened his other hand, then gave him to the Tucorory, and made them stand behind to increase the appearance of our number. I then advanced to the edge of the hill, and cried out with a loud voice, "Stop! for you cannot pass here." Whether they understood it I do not know, but they still persisted in mounting the hill. I again cried, shewing my firelock, "Advance a step farther, and I'll fire." After a short pause they all dismounted from their camels, and one of them, with his lance in his hand, came forward till within twenty yards, upon which Idris immediately knew them, and said they were Ababde. "Ababde or not," said I, "they are seventeen men and Arabs, and I am not of a disposition, without further surety, to put myself in their hands, as Mahomet Aga did. I am sure they are perfectly in our power now, as long as they stand where they are." Idris then told me that he was married to one of the Ababde of Shekh Ammer, and he would go and get a sure word from them. "Tell them from me," said I, "that I, too, am the friend of Nimmer their Shekh, and his two sons, and of Shekh Hammam of Furshout; that I am going into Egypt, have been followed by the Bishareen, and trust nobody; have twenty men armed with firelocks, and will do them no harm, provided they consent to pass one by one, and give a man for a hostage."

Idris, without arms, having joined the man who had advanced towards us, went down with him to the body of strangers, and the treaty was soon agreed to. Two of the principal men among them approached me without their lances, and the compliment of peace, "Salam Alicum! and Alicum Salam!" was given and returned by both sides. They seemed, however, startled at seeing the Bishareen with both

his hands chained; but I told them, that had no regard to them, and desired Idris to order their camels to go on; and one of the Barbarins in the meantime brought them a gourd full of water, and bread; for eating together is like pledging your faith. They had not heard of the fate of Mahomet Aga, and seemed very ill-pleased at it, saying, that Abou Bertran was a thief and a murderer. All the camels being past, I asked them whither they were going? They said to Atbieh, west of Terfowey, to gather senna for the government of Cairo. I would very fain have had them to sell or exchange with me a couple of camels. They said theirs were not strong; that before they could reach home they would be much in the same condition with our own; that they were obliged to load them very heavily, as indeed the bags they had behind them to carry the senna seemed to indicate their profit was but small, so that the death of one camel was a most serious loss.

I thought myself obliged in humanity to introduce our prisoner to the two Ababde that had remained with us. They said, they intended to take water at Terfowey, and we told them briefly the accident by which we came in company with the Bishareen. They, on the contrary, thought that we had been a party of soldiers from Assouan, who had apprehended the Arab. Immediately after which they conversed in the language of Beja, which is that of the Habab, Suakem, and Masuah. I told them plainly, that, though I knew that language, I would not suffer them to speak any but Arabic, understood by us all. They immediately complied, and then inquired about the position of Abou Bertran and his tribe of Bishareen. This, too, I would not suffer the Arab to inform them

of, but charged them, as he did also, to tell his wives that he was well, and ate and drank as we had done, and was within two days of arriving at Assouan, whence he should be returned to them with the rewards promised. I then desired them to lay a lance in a manner that the point should be towards Syene, which they accordingly did, and with a long needle of 12 inches in a brass box, having an arch of a few degrees marked on it, I, with the utmost attention, took the direction from Haimer to Syene N. N. W. or more northerly. I would very willingly have had it in my power to have made an observation of latitude, but noon was passed; I contented myself, therefore, with keeping my route as distinctly as possible till the evening.

At 40 minutes past one o'clock we left Haimer, and our friends, the Ababde, continued their route, after giving us great praise, as well for our civility, as our keeping the watch like men, as they expressed it. At half past eight we alighted at Abou Ferege, a place where there was very little verdure of any kind. Here, for the first time on our journey, we met with a cloudy sky, which effectually disappointed my observation of latitude; but every noon and night I described, in a rough manner, my course through the day, carrying always a compass, with a needle about five inches radius, round my neck, by a lace, and resting in my pocket. I thus found that we had kept the line directly upon Syene, which the Ababde Arab had shewed us.

On the 26th, at half after six in the morning, we set out from Abou Ferege, continuing nearly in the same direction upon Syene till eleven o'clock, when, for the purpose of observation only, I alighted at a place called Abou Heregi, without water, grass, or

food for our camels. We were exceedingly averse to exertions, and became so weak and spiritless, that it was not possible to prevail upon our people to take the large quadrant out of its chest to put it together, and prepare it for observation. I therefore took a Hadley's quadrant. with a mixture I had made, which served me better than quick-silver, and made my observation by reflection at Abou Heregi, and found it in lat. 23°, from which I inferred, with some degree of comfort to myself, that the longitude of Syene in the French maps is ill laid down, and that we were now in the direction upon Syene, had no westing to run down, but the journey must finish in a very few days.

At two o'clock in the afternoon we left Abou Heregi, and at four had an unexpected entertainment, which filled our hearts with a very short-lived joy. The whole plain before us seemed thick-covered with green grass and yellow daisies. We advanced to the place with as much speed as our lame condition would suffer us; but how terrible was our disappointment, when we found the whole of that verdure to consist in senna and coloquintida, the most nauseous of plants, and the most incapable of being substituted as food for man or beast. At nine o'clock in the evening we alighted at Saffieha, which is a ridge of craggy mountains to the S. E. and N. W. The night here was immoderately cold, and the wind north. We were now very near a crisis, one way or the other. Our bread was consumed, so that we had not sufficient for one day more; and though we had camels flesh, yet, by living so long on bread and water, an invincible repugnance arose either to smell or taste it. As our camels were at their last gasp, we had taken so sparingly of water, that, when we came to divide

it, we found it insufficient for our necessities, if Syene was even so near as we conceived it to be.

Georgis had lost one eye, and was nearly blind in the other. Ismael and he had both become so stiff by being carried, that they could not bear to set their feet to the ground; and I may say for myself, that, though I had supported the wounds in my feet with a patience very uncommon, yet they were arrived at that height as to be perfectly intolerable, and, as I apprehended, on the point of mortification. The bandage, which the Bishareen had tied about the hollow of my foot, was now almost hidden by the flesh swelling over it. Three large wounds on the right foot, and two on the left continued open, whence a quantity of lymph oozed continually. It was also with the utmost difficulty we could get out the rag, by cutting it to shreds with scissars. The tale is both unpleasant and irksome. Two soles which remained from our sandals, the upper leathers of which had gone to pieces in the sand near Gooz, were tied with a cotton cloth very adroitly by the Bishareen. But it seemed impossible that I could walk farther, even with this assistance, and therefore we determined to throw away the quadrant, telescopes, and timekeeper, and save our lives by riding the camels alternately. But Providence had already decreed that we should not terminate this dangerous journey by our own ordinary foresight and contrivance, but owe it entirely to his visible support and interposition.

On the 27th, at half-past five in the morning, we attempted to raise our camels at Saffieha by every method that we could devise, but all in vain; only one of them could get upon his legs, and that one did not stand two minutes till he kneeled down, and could never be raised afterwards. This the Arabs all declared to be the effects of cold; and yet Fahrenheit's

thermometer, an hour before day, stood at 42°. Every way we turned ourselves death now stared us in the face. We had neither time nor strength to waste, nor provisions to support us. We then took the small skins that had contained our water, and filled them as far as we thought a man could carry them with ease; but, after all these shifts, there was not enough to serve us three days, at which I had estimated our journey to Syene, which still however was uncertain. Finding, therefore, the camels would not rise, we killed two of them, and took as much flesh as might serve for the deficiency of bread, and, from the stomach of each of the camels, got about four gallons of water, which the Bishareen Arab managed with great dexterity. It is known to people conversant with natural history, that the camel has within him reservoirs in which he can preserve drink for any number of days he is used to. In those caravans of long course, which come from the Niger across the desert of Selima, it is said that each camel, by drinking, lays in a store of water that will support him for forty days. I will by no means be a voucher of this account, which carries with it an air of exaggeration; but fourteen or sixteen days, it is well known, an ordinary camel will live, though he hath no fresh supply of water. When he chews the cud, or when he eats, you constantly see him throw, from this repository, mouthfuls of water to dilute his food; and nature has contrived this vessel with such properties, that the water within it never putrifies, nor turns unwholesome. It was indeed vapid, and of a bluish cast, but had neither taste nor smell.

The small remains of our miserable stock of black bread and dirty water, the only support we had hitherto lived on amidst the burning sands, and our spirits

likewise were exhausted by an uncertainty of our journey's end. We were surrounded amidst those terrible and unusual phænomena of nature which Providence, in mercy to the weakness of his creatures, has concealed far from their sight, in deserts almost inaccessible to them. Nothing but death was before our eyes; and, in these dreadful moments of pain, suffering, and despair, honour, instead of relieving me, suggested still what was to be an augmentation to my misfortune; the feeling this produced fell directly upon me alone, and every other individual of the company was unconscious of it.

The drawings made at Palmyra and Baalbec for the king, were, in many parts of them, not advanced farther than the outlines, which I had carried with me, that, if leisure or confinement should happen, I might finish them during my travels in case of failure of other employment, so far at least, that, on my return through Italy, they might be in a state of receiving further improvement, which might carry them to that perfection I have since been enabled to conduct them. These were all to be thrown away, with other not less valuable papers, and, with my quadrant, telescopes, and time-keeper, abandoned to the rude and ignorant hands of robbers, or to be buried in the sands. Every memorandum, every description, sketch, or observation since I departed from Badjoura and passed the desert to Cosseir, till I reached the present spot, were left in an undigested heap, with our carrion-camels, at Saffieha, while there remained with me, in lieu of all my memoranda, but this mournful consideration, that I was now to maintain the reality of these my tedious perils, with those who either did, or might affect, from malice and envy, to doubt my veracity upon my ipse dixit alone,

or abandon the reputation of the travels which I had made with so much courage, labour, danger, and difficulty, and which had been considered as desperate and impracticable to accomplish for more than 2000 years.

I would be understood not to mean by this, that my thoughts were at such a time in the least disturbed with any reflection on the paltry lies that might be propagated in malignant circles, which has each its idol, and who, meeting, as they say, for the advancement of learning, employ themselves in blasting the fame of those who must be allowed to have surpassed them in every circumstance of intrepidity, fore-thought, and fair achievement. The censure of these lion-faced and chicken-hearted critics never entered as an ingredient into my sorrows, on that occasion, in the sadness of my heart; if I had not possessed a share of spirit enough to despise these, the smallest trouble that occurred in my travels must have overcome a mind so feebly armed. My sorrows were of another kind; that I should, of course, be deprived of a considerable part of an offering I meant as a mark of duty to my sovereign; that, with those that knew and esteemed me, I should be obliged to run in debt for the credit of a whole narrative of circumstances, which ought, from their importance to history and geography, to have a better foundation than the mere memory of any man, considering the time and variety of events which they embraced; and, above all, I may be allowed to say, I felt for my country, that chance alone, in this age of discovery, had robbed her of the fairest garland of this kind she ever was to wear, which all her fleets, full of heroes and men of science, in all the oceans they might be destined to explore, were in-

capable of replacing upon her brow. These sad reflections were mine, and confined to myself. Luckily my companions were no sharers in them; they had already, in their own sufferings, much more than their little stock of fortitude, philosophy, or education, enabled them to bear.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of the 27th, we saw two kites, or what are called Haddaya, very numerous in Lower Egypt; about a quarter of an hour afterwards, another of the same sort, known to be carrion-birds, probably going in search of the dead camels. I could not conceal my joy at what I regarded as a happy omen. We went five hours and a half this day, and at night came to Waadi el Arab, where are the first trees we had seen since we left El Haimer.

On the 28th, at half past seven in the morning, we left Waadi el Arab, and entered into a narrow defile, with rugged but not high mountains on each side. About twelve o'clock we came to a few trees in the bed of a torrent. Ill as I was, after refreshing myself with my last bread and water, I set out in the afternoon to gain a rising ground, that I might see, if possible, what was to the westward; for the mountains seemed now rocky and high like those of the Kennouss near Syene. I arrived, with great difficulty and pain, on the top of a moderate hill, but was exceedingly disappointed at not seeing the river to the westward; however, the vicinity of the Nile was very evident, by the high, uniform mountains that confine its torrent when it comes out of Nubia. The evening was still, so that sitting down and covering my eyes with my hands, not to be diverted by external objects, I listened and heard distinctly the noise of waters, which I supposed to be the cataract, but it seemed to the southward of us, as

if we had passed it. I was however, fully satisfied that it was the Nile.

Just before I left my station the sun was already low, when I saw a flock of birds, which, in Syria, where they are plenty, are called the Cow-bird. In Egypt they are also numerous upon the Nile, but I do not know their name. They are a small species of the heron, about a third of the size of the common one, milk-white, having a tuft of flesh-coloured feathers upon their breast, of a coarser, stronger, and more hairy-like quality than the shorter feathers. A flock of these birds was flying in a straight line, very low, evidently seeking food along the banks of the river. It was not an hour for birds to go far from their home, nor does this bird feed at a distance from its accustomed haunt at any time. Satisfied then that, continuing our course N. W., we should arrive at or below Syene, I returned to join my companions; but it was now dark, and I found Idris and the Barbarins in some pain, endeavouring to trace me by my footsteps.

I communicated to them this joyful news, which was confirmed by Idris, though he did not himself know the just distance from this place (Abou Seielat), as his usual way had been to Daroo, not to Assouan, which he did not choose to approach, for fear of vexations from the Turkish garrison. A cry of joy followed this annunciation. Christians, Moors, and Turks, all burst into floods of tears, kissing and embracing one another, and thanking God for his mercy in this deliverance; and unanimously, in token of their gratitude, and acknowledgment of my constant attention to them in the whole of this long journey, saluting me with the name of Abou Ferege, Father Foresight, the only reward it was in their power to give.

On the 29th, at seven o'clock in the morning, we left Abou Seielat; about nine, we saw the palm-trees at Assouan; and a quarter before ten arrived in a grove of palm-trees on the north of that city.

CHAP. XIII.

Kind reception at Assouan—Arrival at Cairo—Transactions with the Bey there—Land at Marseilles.

WITHOUT congratulating one another on their escape and safe arrival, as they had the night before at Abou Seielat, my companions with one accord ran to the Nile to drink; though they had already seen, in the course of the journey, two or three tragical instances, the consequences of intemperance in drinking water. I sat myself down under the shade of the palm-trees, to recollect myself. It was very hot, and I fell into a profound sleep. But Hagi Ismael, who was neither sleepy nor thirsty, but exceedingly hungry, had gone into the town in search of somebody that would give him food. He had not gone far before his green turban and ragged appearance struck some brethren janizaries, who met him; one of whom asked him the reason of his being there, and whence he came? Ismael, in a violent passion, and broken Arabic, said, that he was a janizary of Cairo, was last come from hell, where there was not one devil, but thousands, from a country of Kafrs that called themselves Mussulmen; that he had walked through a

desert where the earth was on fire and the wind was flame, and in fear of dying every day with thirst and hunger.

The soldier, who heard him talk in this disjointed, raving manner, desired him to go with him to the Aga. This was the very thing that Ismael wanted. He only desired time to acquaint his companions.—"Have you companions," says the soldier, "from such a country?" "Companions!" says Ismael; "what the devil! do you imagine I came this journey alone?" "If the journey," says the man, "is such as you describe it, I do not think many would go with you: well, go along with my companions, and I will seek yours; but how shall I find them?" "Go," says Ismael, "to the palm-trees, and when you find the tallest man you ever saw in your life, more ragged and dirty than I am, call him Yagoube, and desire him to come along with you to the Aga."

The soldier accordingly found me still sitting at the root of the palm tree. The servants, who had now satisfied their thirst, and were uncertain what was next to be done, were sitting together at some distance from me. They began to feel their own weariness, and were inclined to leave me to a little repose, which they hoped might enable me to overcome mine. For my own part, a dulness and insensibility, an universal relaxation of spirits which I cannot describe, a kind of stupor or palsy of the mind had overtaken me, almost to a deprivation of understanding. I found in myself a kind of stupidity, and want of power to reflect upon what had passed. I seemed to be, as if awakened from a dream, when the senses are yet half asleep, and we only begin to doubt whether what has before passed in thoughts is real, or not. The dangers that I was just now delivered from made no impression upon

my mind; and what more and more convinces me I was for a time not in my perfect senses, is, that I found in myself a hard-heartedness, without the least inclination to be thankful for that signal deliverance which I had just now experienced.

From this stupor I was awakened by the arrival of the soldier, who cried out to us at some distance, "You must come to the Aga to the castle, all of you, as fast as you can; the Turk is gone before you." "It will not be very fast, if we even should do that," said I; "the Turk has ridden two days on a camel, and I have walked on foot, and do not know at present if I can walk at all." I endeavoured, at the same time, to rise and stand upright, which I did not succeed in, after several attempts, without great pain and difficulty. I observed the soldier was in prodigious astonishment at my appearance, habit, and above all, at my distress. "We shall get people in town," says he, "to assist you, and if you cannot walk, the Aga will send you a mule."

The Turk and the Greeks were clothed much in the same manner; Ismael and Michael had in their hands two monstrous blunderbusses. The whole town crowded after us while we walked to the castle, and could not satiate themselves with admiring a company of such an extraordinary appearance. The Aga was struck dumb upon our entering the room, and told me afterwards, that he thought me a full foot taller than any man he had ever seen in his life. I saw he was embarrassed whether he should desire me to sit down or not, so that I saved him the deliberation, by saying, immediately after saluting him, "Sir, you will excuse me, I must sit." He bowed, and made a sign, complacently asking me, "Are you a Turk? Are you a Mussulman?" "I am not a Turk," said I, "nor am

I a Mussulman; I am an Englishman, and bearer of the Grand Signior's firman to all his subjects, and of letters from the regency of Cairo, and from the Porte of Janizaries, to you." "Caz Dangli;" says Ismael, "they are the same as Turks; they came first from Anatolia; I have been at the place." Upon my mentioning the Grand Signior, the Aga got upon his feet, and, without heeding Ismael's speech, said, very politely, "Do you choose to have your servants sit?" "In such a disastrous journey as I have made, sir," said I, "our servants must be our companions; besides, they have a strong excuse for sitting; neither they nor I have a foot to stand upon."

Aga. "Where are those letters and firman?" *Ya.* "Where they may be now I know not; we left them at Saffieha with all the rest of our baggage; our camels died, our provisions and water were exhausted; we, therefore, left every thing behind us, and made this one effort to save our lives. It is the first favour I am to ask of you, when I shall have rested myself two days, to allow me to get fresh camels, to go in search of my letters and baggage." *Aga.* "God forbid I should ever suffer you to do so mad an action! You are come hither by a thousand miracles, and after this, will you tempt God and go back? we shall take it for granted what those papers contain. You will have no need of a firman between this and Cairo." *Ya.* "We shall leave it upon that footing for the present; allow me only to say, I am a servant of the king of England, travelling, by his order, and for my own and my countrymen's information; that I had rather risk my life twenty times, than lose the papers I have left in the desert." *Aga.* "Go in peace, and eat and sleep. Carry them," says he, speaking to his attendants, "to the house of the Schourbatchie." Thus ended our first

interview with the Aga, who put us in possession of a very good house, and it happened to be the very man to whom I was recommended by my correspondents at Cairo when I was first here, who had absolutely forgotten, but soon remembered me, as did many others; but my old friend, the Aga, had been changed, and was then at Cairo.

We were not long arrived before we received from the Aga about fifty loaves of fine wheat bread, and several large dishes of drest meat. But the smell of these last no sooner reached me than I fainted upon the floor. I made several trials afterwards, with no better success, for the first two days, nor could I reconcile myself to any sort of food but toasted bread and coffee. My servants had none of these qualms, for they partook largely and greedily of the Aga's bounty.

I had kept the house five or six days after my arrival, during which I corresponded with the Aga only by messages; and from my servant, who had passed between us, he had learned the whole of our adventures. I then went to the castle for an audience, and intreated the Aga that he would procure six or eight camels to mount my men upon, and bring my baggage from Saffieha. He gave a start at the first request, and would not by any means hear of that proposal; he called it tempting God, and assured me I should be cut off by the very men that had murdered Mahomet Aga; that, having seen the cases and things which I had thrown away at Umarack, they would follow my tract on to Saffieha, would have taken every thing that I had left, and would be now pursuing me up to the gates of Assouan. All this was extremely probable, but it was not to such reasoning that I could be a convert. I had insinuated that the welfare of mankind was concerned in the recovery of those papers; that

there were among them recipes, which, if they did not totally prevent the plague, and the small pox, would at least greatly lessen their violence and duration.—This, and, perhaps, a more forcible insinuation, that he should not be without a recompence for any trouble that he gave himself on my account, brought him at last to consent to my request, and we arranged our expedition accordingly.

Our first step was to send for Idris and the Arab from Daroo; for neither of them would enter the town with us, for fear some story should be trumped up against them regarding Mahomet Towash's murder, which would not have failed to have been the case had not we been with them; but, upon the Aga sending a man of confidence for them, they both came without delay, and were lodged in my house, under my protection.

The night following, every thing being ready, we set out after it was dark, from the castle, all upon dromedaries. The gates of the town were open for us, and were immediately shut upon our passing through them; the Aga fearing his own people as much as the Bishareen; and saying always by way of proverb, "Every body is an enemy in the desert." The Aga had sent four servants belonging to his stables to accompany us; active, lively, and good-humoured fellows. Our people, too, were all recruited. Ismael, and blind Georgis, were left to take care of the house in my absence. About twelve o'clock we got into a valley, and hid ourselves in the lowest part of it, under a bank, for the night was exceeding cold; but we had spirits with us, which we drank with moderation. We there refreshed our beasts about half an hour, and again stopt in a valley among trees. I was afraid that we had passed our baggage in the dark, as none of us

were perfectly sure of the place; but as soon as light came, we recovered our tract as fresh and entire as when we made it. After having gone about half an hour in our former footsteps, we had the unspeakable satisfaction to find our quadrant and whole baggage; and by them the bodies of our slaughtered camels, a small part of one of them having been torn by the haddaya, or kite.

It was agreed we should not stay here, but load and depart immediately: this was done in an instant; five camels easily carried the loads, with a man upon them besides; and there were three more camels, upon which we rode by turns. We made a brisk retreat from Saffieha to Syene, which is about forty miles. At a little past four in the afternoon we entered the town again, without any accident whatever, or without having seen one man on our journey.

Here then we were to close our travels through the desert, by discharging the debts contracted in it. We had now got our credit and letters, which furnished us with money. I began by recompensing Idris Welled Hamran, the Hybeer, for his faithful services.—The next thing was to keep our faith with our prisoner. I had made Idris choose him a good camel, clothed him anew, and gave him dresses for his two wives, with a load of dora. I then dispatched him with the Aga's protection, wondering what men we were, who, without compulsion, or subterfuge, kept our words so exactly. Though rich beyond his hopes, and so very lately our enemy, the poor fellow, with tears in his eyes, declared, if I would permit him, he would only go back and deliver up what I had given him to his family, and return to me at Syene, and follow me as my servant wherever I should go.

Although we had wherewithal to have bought proper dresses, I thought it better to do this when we should come to Cairo. We got each of us a coarse barracan, for cleanliness only, and a pair of trowsers. I furnished Ismael with a new green turban, to give us some weight with the vulgar during our voyage down the Nile. I then went to my friend, the Aga, to concert the measures that remained necessary for leaving Assouan and beginning our journey. He testified the greatest joy at seeing us again. He had been informed of our whole expedition by his servants the night before, and praised us, in the presence of his attendants, for our alacrity, steadiness, and courage, under the great fatigues of travelling. Ismael had told him of the trees and plants which I painted, and he expressed great curiosity to see them when I should find it convenient. From the known disposition of those people, that what they desire must be granted instantly, I asked him whether he was at leisure or not to see them?—He said, "By all means; it was a good time." I then sent Michael, my servant, for a book of trees, and one of fishes.

In the interim arrived one of their priests, or an Imam, who are esteemed the most learned of their clergy. Ill-humour and ill-breeding is the characteristic of violent people of all religions; a Christian fanatic is not one bit more charitable towards those that differ from him than a Turkish saint; the greatest difference between them is the turban. Though I was the only reason of his coming there at that time, he passed me with the most contemptuous indifference, his eyes half shut and lifted up to heaven, full of that exalted pride by which his great master fell from happiness. "I wish to know," says he to the Aga, regardless of me, "if that Kafr saw any thing of Mahomet Towash in the desert?" The Aga asked me, I

saw, with some degree of shame, and I answered him: "I saw Mahomet Towash alive at Chendi, richly clothed, as if he had been at Mecca. He had twelve or fourteen men armed with fire-locks, and about fourscore Tucorory, each with a lance in his hand, to whom he was to give food and water in crossing the desert. There were three Hybeers, all Bishareen, who had come from Suakem with the caravan, and were carrying back senna to the neighbourhood of Syene. I offered to join company with them; and though one Hybeer was enough for him, yet, to distress me as being a Christian, he took the whole three along with him. In vain Sittina, Wed Ageeb's sister, and Wed el Faal's mother, desired him to leave one of the Bishareen Hybeers for me, or rather to join our companies together, for the Bishareen were not to be trusted. Contrary to the desire of the chief of the Arabs, he took away the three Hybeers, to disappoint me; he found them three murderers, and left me the only honest man whom he did not know. God punished the presumption and pride of which he was full, just as this Moullah, who last came in, and sits before you, appears to be."

The Aga then asked me, if I saw him afterwards? "You know, I suppose, the story. One of the three Hybeers went to Abou Bertran, a principal Shekh of the Bishareen, and prepared a party to meet them on the road at the next station, while the other two Hybeers, their guides, took care to deceive him by lies, and carried him directly upon the road where the plot was laid. About twenty men on camels, armed with lances, and as many young men on foot, with swords, came to meet him, and those upon camels made their beasts kneel down at some distance from him, as out of respect coming to kiss his hands, as of a holy person belonging to the Caaba, their sanctuary at Mecca.

"The vain, imprudent man dismounted from his camel, to give them a more easy opportunity of paying him their respects; and when one of them held him by the hand in token of friendship, another cut him across the hams with a broad sword, and a third run him through the back with a lance. He endeavoured to put his hands to his pistols, but it was too late. They afterwards persuaded his servants, who had fire-arms in their hands, and, like fools, did not use them, to capitulate; and, after they had disarmed them, they carried them aside, and murdered them also, then took away all the water and camels, and left the Tucorory to die with thirst. You asked me when I saw him after his leaving Chendi? I tell you it was at a station of the Bishareen, two hours before you come to Umarack; his body lay upon the sand withered and dried, but not corrupted; his hough of the right leg, and back-sinew of the left, just above the heel, were cut asunder by a sword. The wounds through his body were apparent. The lance, I apprehend, had some crooks below the head of it, as is their custom, because a considerable quantity of his bowels were drawn out at the back. He had two wounds upon his head, which I suppose were given him after he was dead; for they had cut through the skull entirely, and any one of them would have been mortal in a moment. Ismael and the Barbarin threw sand over him. For my part, I paid no sort of respect to the carcase of a man, who, when living, had shewed so little for my preservation. We went to the right, and followed some footsteps; we saw three men dead, all big and corpulent; they were all thrust through with three lances; each of them had his throat cut, and one his jaw broken.

"All the next day the road was strewed with the bodies of the Tucorory, and the day after, at nine

o'clock in the morning, we found his horse dead; the day following we found dead bodies of people, who had perished with thirst, scattered here and there like the track of a pursuit after a battle; their dry bottles, made of gourds, were grasped in their hands, and some held them to their mouths, as if sucking them. God, as I say, punished this man, by allowing his pride and presumption to blind him; for, had we joined our companies, there could not have been a better place imagined to have fought the Bishareen than that spot, had they dared to attack, which is not probable. It was a narrow, deep, sandy strait, and rugged on each side of it. We could have put our camels, with our water, in perfect security behind us, while our fire-arms, safely from the rock, would, with the first discharge, have destroyed the best men among them, and scattered the herd of them into the desert. The Tucorory would have seized their camels and water, of which they had but a small quantity, or we should have shot the skins through, or the Aga's horse would have overtaken them. In either case, as they were two day's journey from Abou Bertran, the greatest part of them would have died with thirst; and if they had chosen to follow us, which after this rude treatment they would not have done, they could never have reached us till we had got out of their territory into those of the Ababde, where they were as much strangers, and in as great danger as we, and the wells not capable of filling their girbas, so that they would have brought themselves both into distress and dispute. This is all that I know of Mahomet Towash."

The Aga said to himself, "Ullah Akbar!" and several of the company made their private ejaculations. The Iman had not yet spoke, but addressing himself to the Aga, "True it is," says he, "God is great,

and does what seems to him best; or who would have thought that a servant of the Caaba should be forsaken, while Kafrs, like them, a thousand of them not of the account of one hair of that man's head, were protected by him, and arrived safe and unhurt!"

I was exceedingly angry, but weak in health and spirits; besides, I despised the Imam heartily, and was determined to be silent. But directly addressing himself to me, which he hitherto had not done, "I wonder," says he, "how a Kafr like you, a man of no more worth than the dust under a Mussulman's feet, should dare to wear a white turban, which none are permitted to do but true believers, and men of consideration, of learning, or in the law!" I could hold no longer. "Kafr!" said I, "do you call me? You are a Kafr yourself. I worship God as you do, and Jesus Christ, whom Mahomet calls Rouch Ullah, the Spirit of God. Kafrs worship stones and trees, are ill-bred, and rude in manners, such as you are. Sir," said I to the Aga, "I demand of you if the Grand Signior, whose firman you have in your hand, when writing of me, calls me Kafr? Does Ali Bey, and the Porte of Janizaries, use such opprobrious expressions? If they do not, you suffer me to be affronted in contempt of their orders, in a fortress which you command in the Grand Signior's name, which is not to your credit, either as a mussulman or a soldier." "He is right," says an old man, who seemed to be a secretary. "Moullah," says the Aga, "I did not expect this from you; I did not think you could be so absurd as to ask any man, returning from so dangerous a journey as his, the reason of the colour of his turban." "I do not refer that to his discretion," said I, "there is my firman; I insist upon its being read at the divan, and I will afterwards dress my

head and my body in any colour that is permitted me therein, and that I know is every sort of colour*; and I insist that my firman may be read in the Divan."

"Moullah," says Hagi Ismael, addressing himself to the Imam, who had twice attempted to speak, but could not get permission, "you put me in mind of these liars and thieves at Teawa; all their turbans were white or green; they call themselves mussulmen, and sheraffe, and men of learning like you; but I swear, greater Kafrs than they were never in hell. I wish you may not be something of that kind." Hagi Ismael was standing behind. He had a barracan like us, a red cap and no turban, and the Moullah, I believe, did not know that he was a Turk, and still less that he was a sherriffe; I fancy he rather took him for a Greek, from the bad manner in which he pronounced the Arabic. "Friend," said the priest, "take this piece of advice from me, and speak more reverently of your betters, or you may have a chance to get your tongue scraped." Hagi Ismael was never blessed with much temper. He was very honest, but, though seventy years old, was as passionate as a child, and the more so, as he did not understand the language. He was an officer in the Porte of Janizaries, besides being a sherriffe; had been sent, as I have already said, by the Bey, to escort the Abuna to Abyssinia. Unluckily, at this time he understood what was said distinctly, and came up close to the Moullah, saying, in a violent passion, "Kafr Meloun Ibn kelb,—*i. e.* Pagan accursed, and race of a dog!—do you threaten me, a sherriffe, with a grey beard? Who are my betters? The

* It is always the part of a firman from the Porte, that the bearer is at liberty to wear what colour, dress, or arms he pleases.

Aga is not my superior, were he a sherriffe, which he is not. He is an officer of the Janizaries, as I am; he commands me to-day, and I command him to-morrow; but, if it was not for his presence, I would not leave that beard of yours till I had shaken your head from your shoulders."

All now was confusion. I cried, "Hagi Ismael, for God's sake forbear." Every body spoke, nobody heard. The Moullah had crossed the room, and sat down beside the Aga, who said to him very sternly, "What Yagoube may do, and what he may not do, in Syene, has never been confided to you, though it has been to me; and I have not thought it necessary to take your advice upon it. This man is the servant of a king. Were you to insult him in Constantinople, his complaint would cost a much greater man than you his life, even this day before sun-set. Who taught you to call him Kafr, whom you had never before seen, and then abuse the janizary, who, besides, is a sherriffe, and an aged man, whose hand better men than you kiss when they meet him in the street? Go home and learn wisdom, since you cannot teach it; at least, don't make the Grand Signior's castle the scene of your abuse and folly." The Moullah upon this rebuke departed, very much humbled.

As Michael had brought the drawings, I turned to the trees and flowers. The Aga was greatly pleased with them, and laughed, putting them up to his nose, as if smelling them. They did not offend him, as they were not the likeness of any thing that had life. I then shewed him a fish, and reached the book to an old man with a long beard, but who had a very cheerful countenance. He looked at it with great surprise. The Aga had several times called him his father. "Do not be angry," says he to me, "if I ask you a question. I am not such a man as the Moullah that

is gone." "I will answer all your questions with pleasure," said I, "and, in your turn, you must not take the answer ill." "No, no," said two or three of them, "Hagi Soliman knows better." *Soliman.* "Do you not believe," says he, "that that fish will rise against you at the day of judgment?" *Ya.* "I do not know, but I shall be very much surprised if it does." "I assure you he will," says Hagi Soliman. *Ya.* "Be it so; it is a matter of indifference to me." *Sol.* "Do you know what God will say to you about that fish? Shall I tell you?" *Ya.* "I have not the least idea, and you will oblige me." *Sol.* "God will say to you, Did you make that fish? What will you answer?" *Ya.* "I will answer, I did." *Sol.* "He will say to you again, Make a soul to it." *Ya.* "I will answer, I cannot." *Sol.* "He will say, Why did you make that fish's body, when you was not capable to give it a soul? What can you answer then?" *Ya.* "I made that body, because thou gavest me talents and capacity to do it. I do not make the soul, because thou hast denied me power and ability, and reserved that to thyself only." *Sol.* "Do you think he will be contented with that answer?" *Ya.* "I do most certainly think so. It is truth, and I do not think a more direct one can be given." *Sol.* "Aha! the Moullah would tell you that will not do; painting things that have life is idolatry, and the punishment is hell-fire." *Ya.* "Patience, then, my case is desperate; for it is not a sin I intend to repent of." Thus ended this curious discussion, and we went away in perfect good humour one with the other. A number of the better sort drank coffee with me in the evening. The Aga sent me two sheep, and, observing my feet much inflamed and wounded, made me likewise a present of a pair of slippers of soft Turkey leather to defend them from the inclemency of the weather.

It was the 11th of December when we left Syene; we cannot say sailed, for our mast being down, we went with the current and the oars, when the wind was against us. In our voyage down the Nile we had but very indifferent weather, clear throughout the day, exceedingly cold in the night and morning; but, being better clothed, better fed than in the desert, and under cover, we were not so sensible of it, though the thermometer shewed the same degrees. Above all, we had a good decent provision of brandy on board, part of which I had procured from the Aga, part from the Schourbatchie my landlord, neither of whom knew the other had given me any, and both of them pretended to each other, and to the world, that they never tasted fermented liquors of any kind, nor kept them in their custody.

I had given to each of my servants, to Soliman and to the Greeks likewise, a common blanket, called a barracan, of the warmest and coarsest kind, with a waistcoat and trowsers of the same, and all of us, I believe, had consigned to the Nile the clothes in which we passed the desert. The meanness of our appearance did not at all shock us, since nothing contributes more to safety in a country like this. I passed Shekh Nimmer not without regret, but it was night, and I was very ill.

On the 19th we arrived at How, where the intermitting fever, which I had at Syene, again returned, with unusual violence; and, what was most unlucky, my stock of bark was almost exhausted, and the Rais had business that obliged him to lie by for a day. As we were within a small distance of Furshout, I dispatched one of the Barbarins, with a camel, to the fathers at the monastery of Furshout, informing them of my arrival and very bad state of health, and requesting them to send me some wheat-bread, as

mine was all consumed, and likewise some rice, if they had any. Upon the Arab's first delivering his message the fathers treated him as an impostor, declaring that they knew from good authority that I was drowned in the Red Sea, which another of them contradicted, being equally positive, from the same good authority, that my death had happened from robbers in Abyssinia. The Barbarin (a shrewd fellow) desired the fathers to observe, that, if I had been drowned in the Red Sea, it was not possible I could be slain by robbers on land two years afterwards; therefore, as one report was certainly false, both might be so, and he assured them this was the case, and that I was at How; but they laughed him to scorn, and threatened to carry him to Shekh Hamam to punish him. The poor fellow answered very pertinently, "If I had come in Yagoube's name for gold or silver, then you might have distrusted me; but sure it is not worth my while to hire a camel to come here from How, and go back again, to cheat you out of two loaves of bread and a pound of rice, which I never tasted myself till I was with Yagoube, who made us partake of every thing that he eat as long as it lasted, and fasted with us when our meat was exhausted." They continued to ask *him*, where he had found me? The fellow said, At Ras el Feel; and not being able to describe where that was, a fresh altercation began, in which it was concluded betwixt the two reverend disputants, that I had been drowned three years before in the Red Sea, and therefore all the story of Ras el Feel must be a lie.

It happened, as indeed was often the case in these matters, that my Greek servant Michael had been more provident than I. He had thought something of this kind might be possible, and therefore had desired the Barbarin, if so it happened, to call at

Shekh Ismael's at Badjoura, and inquire of him in my name for a loaf or two of wheat bread and some rice. This the Barbarin did with some diffidence, after the refusal received from the fathers, and was very much surprised at the cheerful reception Shekh Ismael gave him. The bread and rice were sent; he too had heard of my death, but was much easier convinced that I was still alive than the reverend fathers had been, because more desirous that it should be so.

Next day, the 20th, we arrived at Furshout, though Hagi Ismael's invitation, and the unkindness of the fathers, had strongly tempted me to take up my quarters at Badjoura to guard him against the pleurisy, and the mistaking again the month of Ramadan. Some awkward apologies passed at meeting; and if these fathers, the sole object of whose mission was the conversion of Ethiopia and Nubia, were averse before to the undertaking their mission, they did not seem to increase in keenness from the circumstances which they learned from me.

On the 27th we sailed for Cairo. At a small village before we came to Achmim we were hailed by a person, who, though meanly dressed, spoke with the tone of authority, and asked for a passage to Cairo, which I would have denied him if I could have had my own will; but the Rais readily promised it *him* upon his application. He afterwards told me he was a Copht and a Christian, employed to gather the Bey's taxes in such villages as were only inhabited by Christians, to which the Bey did not permit his Turks to go. "I heard," says he, "you was coming down the Nile, and I waylaid you for a passage; the Rais knows who I am, and that I shall not be troublesome to you; but I have a large sum of money, and do not choose to have it known. I hope, however, you will give me your protection for the sake of my

master."—"Indeed, friend," said I, "I have but seven shillings in the whole world; and my clothes, I believe, are not worth much above that sum, and it is but a few days ago I was rejoicing at this as one of my greatest securities. But since Providence has, I hope for your good, thrown you and your money in my way, I will do the best for you that is in my power, the same as if it was my own."

On the 10th of January 1773, we arrived at the convent of St George, all of us, as I thought, worse in health and spirits than the day we came out of the desert. Nobody knew us at the convent, either by our face or our language, and it was by a kind of force that we entered. Ismael and the Copht went straight to the Bey, and I, with great difficulty, had interest enough to send to the patriarch and my merchants at Cairo, by employing the only two piastres I had in my pocket. If the capuchins in Furshout received us coldly, these Caloyeros of St George kept still at a greater distance. It was half by violence that we got admittance into the convent. But this difficulty was to be but of short duration; the morning was to end it, and give us a sight of our friends, and in the meantime we were to sleep soundly. We had nothing else to do, having no victuals, and the Caloyeros nothing to give us, even if they had been inclined, of which we had not yet seen the smallest token.

This we thought, and this, in the common view of things, we were entitled to think; but we forgot that we were at Cairo, no longer to depend upon the ordinary or rational course of events, but upon the arbitrary, oppressive will of irrational tyrants. Accordingly I had, for about an hour, lost myself in the very uncommon enjoyment of a most profound sleep, when I was awakened by the noise of a number of strange

tongues, and, before I could recollect myself sufficiently to account what this strange tumult might be, eleven or twelve soldiers, very like the worst of banditti, surrounded the carpet whereon I was asleep. I had presence of mind sufficient to recollect this was not a place where people were robbed or murdered without cause; and convinced in my own mind that I had given none, from that alone I inferred I was not to be robbed or murdered at that instant. Without this, the appearance of the strangers, their dress, language, and behaviour, all joined to persuade me of the contrary. I asked them, with some surprise, "What is the matter, Sirs? What is the meaning of this freedom?" The answer was in Turkish, "Aya! Aya! Get up! the Bey calls you."—"The Bey," says I, "certainly calls at a very unseasonable hour." The answer was, "Get up, or we will carry you by force." "I fancy, friends," said I, "you have mistaken me for some other person; I have not been here above two hours, and since that time have never been out of the convent. It is impossible the Bey should know that I am here."—"What signifies it to us," says one in Lingua Franca, "whether he knows you are here or not? he has sent us for you, and we are come; Aya! Aya! get up!" He put his hand forward to take me by the arm. "Keep your distance, you insolent blackguard," said I, "remember I am an Englishman; do not lay your hands upon me. If the Bey call me, he is master in his own country, and I will wait upon him; But hands off: though I have not seen Mahomet Bey these three years, he knows what is owing to his own character better than to suffer a slave like you to lay his filthy hands on a stranger like me."—"No! No! Mallem," says the man that spoke Italian, "we will do you no harm. Ismael, that you brought from Habesh, has

been with the Bey, and he wants to see you; and that is all."—"Then stay without," said I, "till I am ready, and I will come to you presently."

Out they went: I heard them crying to the Caloyeros for drink, but they never, in their lives, were in a place where they could address themselves worse for either meat, or liquors; on the other hand, I did not keep them long in dressing. I had no shirt on, nor had I been master of one for fourteen months past. I had a waistcoat of coarse, brown, woollen blanket, trowsers of the same, and an upper blanket of the same wrapt about me, and in these I was lying. I had cut off my long beard at Furshout, but still wore prodigious mustachoes. I had a thin, white muslin cloth round a red Turkish cap, which served me for a night-cap, a girdle of coarse woollen cloth that wrapt round my waist eight or ten times, and swaddled me up from the middle to the pit of my stomach, but without either shoes, or stockings. In the left of my girdle I had two English pistols mounted with silver, and, on the right hand, a common crooked Abyssinian knife, with a handle of a rhinoceros horn. Thus equipt, I was ushered by the banditti, in a dark and very windy night, to the door of the convent.

The Sarach, or commander of the party, rode upon a mule, and, as a mark of extreme consideration, he had brought an ass for me, with sods, or a carsaddle upon its back, the only animal that, to the shame of our Christian rulers, any of our faith is suffered to ride on in Cairo. The beast had not a light load, but was strong enough. The difficulty was, its having no saddle, and there were no stirrups, so that my feet would have touched the ground had I not held them up, which I did with the utmost pain and difficulty, as they were all inflamed and sore, and full of holes from the inflammation in the desert. Nobody can ever know, from a more particular description, the

hundredth part of the pain I suffered that night. I was happy that it was all external. I had hardened my heart; it was strong, vigorous, and whole, from the near prospect I had of leaving this most accursed country, and being again restored to the conversation of men.

The mule, on which the Sarach rode, went at a very brisk pace; my animal did her best, but she could not keep up with the mule. Each man of the soldiers, besides the rest of his arms, had a quarter-staff like a watchman's pole, about nine feet long, with which every one in his turn laid heartily on the ass to make her keep up with the Sarach's mule. I had every reason to sympathize with the beast for the severity of the blows, of which I was a perfect judge, as whether through malice, or heedlessness, every fourth stroke landed upon my back, or haunches, so that my flesh was discoloured for more than two months afterwards. Speaking was in vain; you might as well have cried to the wind not to blow. Few people walk in the streets of Cairo at night; some we did meet who made us way, only observing to each other, when we passed, that I was some thief the Janizary Aga had apprehended. In this most disagreeable manner, I had rode near three miles, when I arrived at the Bey's palace. There all was light and all was bustle, as if it had been noon-day. I alighted with great difficulty from my disconsolate ass, but with much greater pleasure than ever I mounted the finest horse in the world. None of the people there knew what I came for, but thought I was some Arab from the country. At last I saw a Copht, who had been a servant of Ali Bey. I told who I was, and he immediately knew me, but had not heard that I was arrived, and still less that I was sent for; but he went in to the Bey's secretary, who ordered my immediate admission.

In the mean time, my Sarach and company, who had used me so tenderly, came round me, desiring the Bacsish, or money to drink. "Look you, friend," said I, "your master knows me well, and you shall see what is the Bacsish he will give you." A number of Turks standing by, asked, "What did he do to you? Did he use you ill? Tell the Bey, and he will do for him." My friend seemed to be sensible he was in a scrape, and, though the order of the Bey came for my being admitted, he would not allow me to pass, but put his back against the door till I promised to say nothing to the Bey.

I was introduced to Mahomet Bey Abou Dahab.—He was son-in-law to Ali Bey, my friend, whom he had betrayed, and forced to fly into Syria, where he still was at the head of a small army. He had been present with him the day I had my last audience, when he was plainly dressed as a soldier. A large sofa, or rather two large sofas furnished with cushions, took up a great part of a spacious saloon. They were of the richest crimson and gold, excepting a small yellow and gold one like a pillow, upon which he was leaning, supporting his head with his left hand, and sitting just in the corner of the two sofas. Though it was late, he was in full dress, his girdle, turban, and handle of his dagger, all shining with the finest brilliants, and a finer sprig of diamonds upon his turban than what I had seen his father-in-law wear, once when I was with him.

The rooms was light as day, with a number of wax-torches, or candles. I found myself humbled at the sight of so much greatness and affluence. My bare feet were so dirty, I had a scruple to set them upon the rich Persian carpets with which the whole floor was covered, and the pain that walking at all occasioned, gave me altogether so crouching and cringing a

look, that the Bey, upon seeing me come in, cried out, "What's that? Who is that? From whence is he come?" His secretary told him, and immediately upon that I said to him in Arabic, with a low bow, "Mahomet Bey, I am Yagoube, an Englishman; better known to your father-in-law than to you, very unfit to appear before you in the condition I am, having been forced out of my bed by your soldiers in the middle of the only sound sleep I have had for many years." He seemed to be exceedingly shocked at this, and said to his attendants in Turkish, "My people! who dares do this? it is impossible." Those that were privy to the message reminded him of his sending for me, and the cause, which he had forgot. They told him what Ismael had said, and what the Copht, the tax-gatherer, had mentioned, all very much in my favour. He turned himself with great violence on the sofa, and said, "I remember the man well, but it was not a man like this; this is bad payment, indeed. I was going to ask you, Yagoube," says he, "who those were that had brought you out in such distress, and I find that I have done it myself; but take my word, as I am a Mussulman, I did not intend it; I did not know you was ill."

My feet, at that time, gave me such violent pain, that I was like to faint, and could not answer; but as there were two flowered velvet cushions upon one of the steps above the floor, I was obliged to kneel down upon one of them, as I did not know how sitting might be taken. The Bey immediately saw this, and cried out, "What now? what is the matter?" I saw he thought I had some complaint to make, or something to ask. I shewed him my feet in a terrible situation, the effects, I told him, of my passing through the desert. He desired me immediately to sit down on the cushion. "It is the coldness of the night, and hang-

ing upon the ass," said I, "occasions this; the pain will be over presently." "You are an unfortunate man," says the Bey; "whatever I mean to do for your good, turns to your misfortune." "I hope not, Sir," said I; "the pain is now over, and I am able to hear what may be your commands." "I have many questions to ask you," says the Bey. "You have been very kind to poor Ismael, who is a Sherriffe, and to my Christian servant likewise; and I wanted to see what I could do for you; but this is not the time; go home and sleep, and I will send for you. Eat and drink, and fear nothing. My father-in-law is gone, but, by the grace of God, I am here in his place; that is enough." I bowed, and took my leave.

The Bey had spoken several times to his servant in Turkish; but these interruptions are too common at such audiences to be taken notice of. I went out to the anti-chamber attended by five or six people, and then into another room, the door of which opened to the lobby where his soldiers, or servants were. There was a slave very richly dressed, who had a small basket with oranges in his hand, who came out at another door, as if from the Bey, and said to me, "Here, Yagoube, here is some fruit for you."

In that country it is not the value of the present but the character and power of the person that sends it, that creates the value; 20,000 men that slept in Cairo that night would have thought the day the Bey gave them, at an audience, the worst orange in that basket, the happiest one in their life. It is a mark of friendship and protection, and the best of all assurances. Well accustomed to ceremonies of this kind, I took a single orange, bowing low to the man that gave it me, who whispered me, "Put your hand to the bottom, the best fruit is there, the whole is for you, it is from the Bey." A purse was exceedingly visible.

It was a large crimson one wrought with gold, not netted, or transparent as ours are, but liker a stocking. I lifted it out; there were a considerable number of sequins in it; I put it in my mouth and kissed it, in respect from whence it came, and said to the young man, that held the basket, "This is, indeed the best fruit, at least commonly thought so, but it is forbidden fruit for me. The Bey's protection and favour is more agreeable to me than a thousand such purses would be."

The servant shewed a prodigious surprise. In short, nothing can be more incredible to a Turk, whatever his quality may be, than to think that any man can refuse money offered him. Although I expressed myself with the utmost gratitude and humility, finding it impossible to prevail upon me, the thing appeared so extraordinary, that a beggar in a barracan, dressed like those slaves who carry water, and wash the stairs, should refuse a purse of gold, he could no longer consent to my going away, but carried me back to where the Bey was still sitting. He was looking at a large piece of yellow sattin. He asked the usual questions, "How now? What is the matter?" To which his slave gave him a long answer in Turkish. He laid down the sattin, turned to me, and said, "Why what is this? You must surely want money; that is not your usual dress? What! does this proceed from your pride?"

"Sir," answered I, "may I beg leave to say two words to you? There is not a man to whom you ever gave money more grateful, or more sensible of your generosity in offering it me, than I am at present.—The reason of my waiting upon you in this dress was, because it is only a few hours ago since I left the boat. I am not, however, a needy man, or one that is distressed for money; that being the case, and as you

have already my prayers for your charity, I would not deprive you of those of the widow and the orphan, whom that money may very naturally relieve. Julian and Rosa, the first house in Cairo, will furnish me with what money I require; besides, I am in the service of the greatest king in Europe, who would not fail to supply me abundantly if my necessities required it, as I am travelling for his service.' "This being so," says the Bey with great looks of complacency, "what is in my power to do for you? You are a stranger now where I command; you are my father's stranger likewise, and this is a double obligation upon me: What shall I do?" "There are," said I, "things that you could do, and you only, if it were not too great presumption for me to name them." "By no means; if I can, I will do it; if not, I will tell you so."

I saw, by the Bey's manner of speaking, that I had risen considerably in character in his opinion since my refusal of the money." "I have, Sir," said I, "a number of countrymen, brave, rich, and honest, that trade in India, where my king has great dominions." He said, as half to himself, "True, we know that." "Now there are many of these that come to Jidda. I left there eleven large ships belonging to them, who, according to treaty, pay high duties to the custom-house, and, from the dictates of their own generosity and magnificence, give large presents to the prince and to his servants for protection; but the sherriffe of Mecca has of late laid duty upon duty, and extortion upon extortion, till the English are at the point of giving up the trade altogether." "Ibn Cahaba," says he, (which is, son of a wh—re), "he paid for that when I was at Mecca." "The Bey took Mecca," says a man at my shoulder. "Why," says the Bey, "when they say you are such a brave nation, why don't you beat down Jidda about his ears? Have you no guns in

your ships?" "Our ships, Sir," said I, "are all armed for war; stout vessels, full of brave officers and skilful seamen: Jidda, and much stronger places than Jidda, could not resist one of them an hour. But Jidda is no part of our dominions; and in countries belonging to stranger princes we carry ourselves lowly, and trade in peace, and never use force till obliged to it in our own defence." "And what would you have me to do?" says he. "Our people," replied I, "have taken a thing into their head, which I am satisfied they are well-founded in: They say, that if you would permit them to bring their ships and merchandize to Suez, and not to Jidda, they might then depend upon your word, that, if they were punctual in fulfilling their engagements, they should never find you failing in yours." "That they shall never have to say of me," says the Bey; "all this is to my advantage.—But you do not tell me what I am to do for you?"—"Be steady, sir," said I, "in your promise; it is now late, but I will come to settle the duties with you; and be assured, that when it is known at home what, at my private desire, you have done for my country in general, it will be the greatest honour that ever a prince conferred on me in my life." "Why, let it be so," says he; "bring coffee; see you admit him whenever he calls; bring a caftan*." Coffee was accordingly brought, and I was clothed in my caftan. I went down stairs with my barracan hid under it, and was received with greater respect by the bye-standers than when I came up; the man was the same, but it was the caftan that made the difference. My friend, the Sarach, and his banditti were ready at the door

* It is a loose garment like a night-gown; it is a gift of ceremony, and mark of favour.

with a mule, which had gilt stirrups, and was finely caparisoned.

I went back with full as much speed as I came, but free from those salutations of the quarter-staff, which I still felt upon my haunches. The scale of politeness was now turned in my favour; and to shew their respect for me, the soldiers knocked down every person they overtook in the streets, giving him first a blow with the quarter-staff upon the head, then asking him, why he did not get out of the way? All my people at St George had given me over for lost, or thought I had gone home to the French merchants, and taken my bed there.

I was twice after this with Mahomet Bey, in which time I concluded the agreement in favour of the English merchants. Instead of 14 per cent. and an enormous present, the Bey agreed for 8, and no present at all; and, at his own expence, sent the firman to Mocha, together with my letter, a copy of which, and instructions given in India in consequence, I have here subjoined.

Mr Greig, Captain Thornhill's lieutenant, whom I have mentioned as having seen at Jidda, was the first who came down the Gulf to Suez in the Minerva; and in the whole voyage, both by sea and after at Cairo, behaved in a manner that did honour to his country.

In the two subsequent visits which I paid to Mahomet Bey, I received the firman, and had a conversation before the Bey with the man that was to go express to Mocha; not that I thought my recommendation was of any consequence after his receiving orders from the Bey; but I knew very well, as diligence was recommended to him, that it might be secured by a small gratuity given unknown to the Bey. Two other similar presents, of no great value, were likewise given

to the two servants who had assisted me in procuring the firman, the original of which I left with the Venetian consul. I thought it was unbecoming in me to starve a cause that promised to be both a private emolument and public benefit; and, as I never expected, so I never received, the smallest return, or acknowledgement, either public or private.

It may be said, that the trade carried on there by Suez and the Isthmus, would not be of any advantage to the India Company, but rather a detriment to it. Such was the answer I got from Lord North upon my first interview with his Lordship after my return, and upon which I shall not pretend to decide. But *this I* shall submit to the public, whether, when a great object, such as that was, is unexpectedly in the power of an individual, he is not obliged, as a good citizen, to avail himself of the occasion that offers, and leave it to that part of the public concerned, to determine whether they can make it of service to themselves or not.

I have read, either in Abbe Prevot, or M. de Maillet (the reader will assist me, as neither of these books are in my hands at present), that the French, *in* the beginning of this century, offered a very large sum of money to the government of Cairo, to be allowed to send only an advice-boat to Suez, to carry and bring back their dispatches from their settlements in India, but they were constantly refused; both the India Company and British government are, by my means, now in possession of that privilege; and I am informed, it has already been of use, both in public and private dispatches.

I must further be permitted to say, that, independent of these particulars, it seemed very strange that, considering the immense empire which belonged to Britain in the East Indies, the Company and their servants should be, to a man, so perfectly ignorant of

the Red Sea and the ports in it, and so indifferent as to the means of being better informed; a sea which washed the shores of their conquests, and came, at the same time, within two days journey of the Mediterranean. To my endeavours it has been owing, that so many ingenious gentlemen have had an opportunity of lending their hands to perfect the chart of that sea, which, I hope, is now in great forwardness. It would perhaps, too, have been more generous and liberal-minded in them, had they honoured the author of the liberty and safety they enjoyed, with at least a word of their approbation. Prisons and chains, ransoms, torments, and perhaps death itself, were the calamities they escaped by my preparing their way, and to this would have been added the miscarriage of their design and their undertaking likewise*.

Copy of Mr Bruce's Letter to the Gentlemen trading to the Red Sea from the British Settlements of Bombay and Bengal.

"GENTLEMEN,

CAIRO, 1st February 1773.

"AT the desire of several gentlemen trading to Jidda in the year 1769, I have spoken to the Bey of Cairo (Mahomet Bey), that he would give permission for bringing the India ships directly to Suez, without stopping at Jidda, where they were constantly ill treated by the sherriffe, and neither payment punctual, nor their effects in safety. Mahomet Bey expressed all

* Not one ship has ever yet entered the Red Sea, as I am informed, without a copy of my letter and firman.

the desire possible to have this speedily executed. He dispatched this express, in which I inclose you the terms of agreement, with a translation from the Arabic original. You will see he renounces all presents; which, however, it will be always prudent to give. Moderate ones will serve, provided he behaves faithfully and generously, as I believe firmly he will. He seeks eight per cent. customs, and leaves it in your option to pay this in goods or money, and 50 patakas anchorage for each vessel; this is for the captain of the port of Suez.

"Arrived at Suez, you will do well to give notice to any of the houses you choose to address yourselves to. There are three French houses of note here; Mess. Napollon and Co., Mess. Rosa and Co., and Mess. l'Anglade and Co.; and these three are rich houses, in great credit, and with whom you are very safe. There is also an Italian house, of credit equal to these, but not so rich; it is Pini and Co. It will always be your interest, if more than one ship comes, to address yourselves to separate houses; for by this means you will be sooner dispatched, have more friends, less risk, and more intelligence.

"As I have no view in this but your advantage, so I will not take upon myself to answer for any consequences. You know what Turks are. I never saw one of them to be trusted in money affairs. You must keep your eyes open, and deal for ready money. You will, however, be much safer, be better used, have better markets, and be sooner dispatched; and if any of your cargo remains unsold, you may leave it here in great security, with a certainty of its selling in winter; and the money will be either remitted to England, or ready for you here at your return, as you direct.

"Cairo is in lat. 30° 2′ 45″; two days and a half easy journey from it is Suez, in lat. 29° 57′ 15″. Ras Mahomet, the Cape that forms the eastern shore of the entrance into the Gulf of Suez, is in lat. 27° 54′ 10″. You should make this Cape while it bears N. E. or N. E. by E. at farthest; for farther east is the entrance of a gulf, which has often been mistaken for that of Suez. Lastly, Tor, the first inhabited place after passing the Cape, is in lat. 28° 12′ 4″; here you may have provisions, water, and a pilot.

"There are no English merchants at Cairo; but there comes, from time to time, a wandering sort of sharpers under that name, either from Mahon, the Greek islands, or Leghorn; and after an establishment of one year, break and disappear. Be careful of having any thing to do with these, for they will either rob you themselves, or betray you to the government, or both. There is no safety but with the three French and one Italian house, before mentioned. If you address yourself to the government, in your affairs of tariffs and firmans, you may do it through means of the Venetian consul, immediately upon your arrival, putting yourselves under his protection. He is a man of honour and credit, and is a colonel in the service of his state. Let him send you the tariff of the Bey before you come to Cairo, or land an ounce of cargo, and you will satisfy him for his trouble. He does not trade, but is very well-affected to our nation; and there is no consul here but the French and Venetian.

"In a word, gentlemen, I have seen your trade to Jidda, and it is a ruinous one; and the sherriffe, now poor and hungry, will every day rob you more and more. After the sealing up the house, and exacting part of the effects of the captains who died at Jidda,

there is no safety for you but either at Mocha or Suez.

I am always,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

JAMES BRUCE.

"To Captain Thornhill of the Bengal Merchant, Captain Thomas Price of the Lion, or any other of the English vessels trading to Jidda.

P. S. "I send you a copy of the firman; also letters for the governors of Bombay and Bengal, inclosing the same; you will see the translator be a person of trust, and have no interest in deceiving you. If I did not think you very safe at Suez I would not write you. You are to bring no coffee, or any produce of Arabia, at least the first voyage, till you make your terms here. I inclose you a letter from the chief of the custom-house.

J. B."

Copy of Instructions from the Managers of the Suez Adventure, to MR JOHN SHAW, *and* CAPTAIN WILLIAM GREIG.

"GENTLEMEN,

"THE proprietors of the Suez Adventure having made choice of you to conduct the undertaking, it is our duty, as managers, to give you the necessary instructions. Inclosed you will receive invoice and bills of loading of the cargo, and likewise of the freight loading on the Bengal Merchant, on account and risk of the concerned, which you are to dispose of in the

Gulf of Mocha, Jidda, or Suez, on the most advantageous terms; observing, at the same time, as nearly as possible, the following instructions:

"As many unforseen accidents may happen that we cannot guard against, and as the proprietors have placed in us an implicit confidence, we now delegate to you, gentlemen, full power and authority to conduct and manage this new undertaking, for which your credit, as well as ours, is engaged; and though we hope it is unnecessary to recommend to you, as an object of the greatest importance, and on which the success of all undertakings depends, a good understanding and harmony between those who are to execute, we are satisfied that your attention to the interest of the proprietors, and your own reputation, will outweigh every other consideration, and that nothing will interrupt that union, which is so absolutely necessary to insure success in new undertakings like the present.

"You are to draw commission of *5 per cent.* on the sales. Mr Shaw, as chief supercargo, will draw *3*, and Capt. Greig *2 per cent.* and on all freight in the same proportion as the cargo. Passengers, or other emoluments that are customary, are to be equally divided between you, and no separate interest to be allowed. As it is usual in all voyages from this port, where there is a supercargo, to allow one-sixth of the cargo as privilege, in lieu of which 12,000 rupees will be divided between you and the officers on return of the vessel.

"Mr Shaw, as chief supercargo, is to have the sole management and disposal of the cargo, and Captain Greig to have the entire management of the navigation of the vessels employed. At the same time, we recommend and desire, that, in all points which require advice in either of the departments, you con-

sult with each other, and that no material step be taken without such advice and consultation; and, should there be a difference in opinion, we expect a minute be made, and the reason for such difference fully set forth, in order to be laid before the proprietors at your return. To prevent any misunderstanding of the general instructions, we shall separate, in the latter part, the two branches of the naval and mercantile, and be more clear and explicit in each particular department.

"The vessels to be employed in the voyage are, the Bengal Merchant, on board of which the cargo is shipped. The Cuddalore schooner, Captain Wedderburn, is granted by the governor * to the proprietors as a tender, to assist in the discovery of the passage to Suez, and the proprietors are to pay half the sailing charges. On her Mr Cunningham, a surveyor, is appointed, and both he and the vessel are entirely under your direction, and they are to receive, from time to time, such instructions as you may judge necessary. The Suez packet is a small schooner equipped for the purpose of attending the Bengal Merchant in the most difficult parts of the navigation; and as she cannot be further useful after your return from Suez to Mocha, we desire she may be sold there, where frequently small vessels sell to advantage.

"On your leaving the pilot you will make the best of your way, with the other two vessels under your charge, to the Malabar coast, and touch at Anjango and Cochin, taking in there coir, hawsers, and water, or any thing you may stand in need of, and without loss of time proceed direct to Mocha. On your arrival

* Warren Hastings, Esq.

there you must make inquiry if any pilots are come down from Suez; should none be arrived, lose as little time as possible, and proceed up above Jidda to Yambo, provided you hear no unfavourable accounts from Suez, such as war or any commotions at Cairo, which you might think may endanger the success of the voyage.

"If such accounts are rumoured at Mocha, trace them so as to be fully satisfied there is foundation for them, and if you have good authority to credit the reports propagated, and are certain they are not spread with a view to discourage your proceeding, in that case we advise your proceeding to Jidda as most for the interest of the concerned. At Jidda you will deliver the customary letters to the bosha and sherriffe; and, without taking notice of any further project, dispose of your cargo, as the articles are all of the proper assortment for that market, and we desire, in that case, you collect your returns as expeditiously as possible; and if you find any considerable freight for Bombay, and the season will admit your going there from Mocha, so as to arrive in Bengal by the middle of October, in that case you will purchase a cargo of cotton, and proceed here directly. Whatever silver you may have after the purchase of the cotton, you will pay into the Company's treasury for bills on this presidency. If you cannot procure a good freight at Jiuda for Bombay, we desire you will proceed from Mocha to the coast of Coromandel, and touch at Negapatnam, where letters will be lodged for you.

"On your arrival at Mocha, should you hear no unfavourable accounts of war, or any disturbances at Cairo, you will proceed to Yambo, where you will again inquire if there are any pilots acquainted with the passage to Suez. If you meet with any, who, upon examination, appear capable of conducting the vessel,

we recommend your taking them on board, but still be very cautious how you trust them; order them to conduct you up the common tract, and keep the two vessels with you till you are satisfied of their abilities; then we advise your dispatching the Cuddalore the outward passage, in order to survey it up to Suez, and give them orders to join you there. But should you be so unlucky as not to meet with pilots, there will be no alternative but to proceed with the greatest care and caution to the outward passage, with your two tenders a-head both day and night, till you reach Tor, where you will meet with pilots and water; and, as we have reason to believe the danger of the passage is then over, if you find it to be the case, you will dispatch back the Cuddalore to make a correct survey as far down as Jidda, in the lat. of 21° 30′. As it cannot be supposed you will be able to make an exact survey in going up in mid-channel, you will instruct Captain Wedderburn to follow the surveyor's order, but, at the same time, to make all necessary remarks himself, as also his officers, and to finish the survey as expeditiously as possible, and to return to the ship at Suez; but, should more time be taken up, and he find it impracticable, he must endeavour to go to Yambo, and there wait for the dispatches, if he can do it with safety; if not, to return to Mocha, and remain there to supply himself with such necessaries as he may stand in need of, to be ready to make the best of his way to Bengal, as soon as he receives your dispatches, and the monsoon will allow him to proceed.

"On your arrival at Suez you will inquire of the master of the port, or governor, whether or not he has any letters, &c. from his master, the Bey, respecting you? Should he have none, you will desire him to forward the short letter from the governor, inform-

ing him of the arrival of the ship at his port. You must not land a piece of goods, or enter into any agreement, or contract, &c. till you hear from the Bey, and, from the answer you receive, consult how to act; but let it be with great caution, till you are perfectly satisfied of the friendly disposition of the Bey towards you; as we have reason to expect the Bey's answer will be polite and favourable, and an invitation to visit Cairo. Mr Shaw will then proceed with the purser, and any other of the officers you may think proper, with a few lascars and servants, properly equipped, to make the embassy brilliant and respectable. The letters, presents, and musters of the cargo should go at the same time; and we recommend that, on Mr Shaw's arrival at Cairo, after he retires from the Bey, he make a visit to the Venetian consul, whom Mr Bruce has mentioned very particularly in his letter. If he finds him the same person he has described, he will receive from him such necessary information as may be useful in his future transactions, and will put himself under his protection in preference to the French houses; but he will act with extreme caution, till he discovers such connection is not disagreeable to the Bey, with whom he must appear to be, on all occasions, perfectly satisfied. We furnish you with a copy of Mr Bruce's letter, to whom we consider ourselves much obliged for the information he has given us. His letters you will find of great service in conducting your business there, and to which we advise your paying strict attention.

"We desire that Captain Greig may remain on board the ship till all the cargo is dispatched and landed, in order to give every necessary advice in transporting the same; and when that is finished, captain Greig is to proceed to Cairo, and afford Mr Shaw any assistance he may require: and we desire, and parti-

cularly recommend, that, as soon as the cargo is sold, and Mr Shaw has made the necessary observations and remarks on the reception he has met with, the goods that have sold to most advantage, and of the sorts that will best answer in future, and other occurrences, that you dispatch such accounts, by the first conveyance you may have to Jidda, to captain Anderson of the Success galley, and duplicate, by the Suez packet to Mocha, to captain Wedderburn of the Cuddalore schooner, with orders for him to proceed to Bengal without delay; and we desire that these dispatches may be directed in a large packet to the governor for his perusal, with draughts and remarks on the passage.

"As we think it of great consequence that you use all possible dispatch in finishing your business at Grand Cairo, so as to leave Suez as early as the season will permit, if the Cuddalore * has been able to join you after the survey, you will then proceed down the channel she has discovered; but if, on the contrary, she has not joined you, and the Suez packet is likewise gone with the dispatches, you must then procure good pilots, and, if possible, a small vessel for fear of accidents, and go down the usual tract of the Suez vessels; making particular remarks on that passage, proceed on to Mocha, and you will attend to the former part of your instructions respecting the destination of the vessel.

"Having now finished our general instructions, we

* The Cuddalore was lost in a storm in the Bay of Bengal, and captain Wedderburn drowned before the commencement of the voyage. A small vessel, called a Gallevat, was substituted, commanded by captain Moffat, who made the voyage.

think it necessary to be more particular in each branch of your departments.

(Signed CUDBERT THORNHILL.
ROBERT HOLFORD.
DAVID KILLICAN."

To CAPTAIN GREIG.

"SIR,

"WE rely on your knowledge, experience, and good conduct, for the navigating part of the voyage, which is entirely entrusted to you; and though we have desired that you advise with Mr Shaw on all difficult points, yet we give you a latitude to follow your own opinion, though contrary to Mr Shaw's, but we expect you both to enter a minute, and set forth your reasons for being of different opinions. Should it be a point of consequence, we advise that you consult with all the officers, and their opinions are to be recorded.

"We desire that a fair log-book be kept, signed by the officer who leaves the deck at noon, in which book every remark and transaction during the voyage is to be inserted, and no erasures must be made, or leaves torn out. Inclosed, is a letter from us to Captain Wedderburn of the Cuddalore, directing him to follow such orders as he may from time to time receive from you.

"At Ingerlee you will give him written orders to keep you company, with such proper signals for day and night as may be necessary; and should he, by stress of weather, or any other accident, part company, you will inform him of your first place of rendezvous, Anjango and Cochin; should he arrive first, he

must remain till you come: Should you arrive and finish your business before the arrival of the Cuddalore, you will wait two or three days, and then proceed to Mocha, leaving orders for his joining you there. If by any accident he should not join you there, and you have got pilots for Suez, you must not lose time, but proceed without him, leaving him instructions to proceed on the survey: but should it so happen that you meet with no pilots at Mocha, and the Cuddalore should not arrive, we still recommend your waiting at Mocha as long as you think it prudent; and if you have the Suez packet with you, you will proceed to Suez if possible, and endeavour to make the island to the S. W. of Cape Ras Mahomet, that you may not make any mistake, and get into the false gulf; but should you find it impracticable, after making every prudent attempt, you will then have a consultation with Mr Shaw and your officers, and bear away for Jidda, following the directions in your general instructions.

"The concerned has been at an immense expence to equip the vessels with additional stores, which in any other voyage than the present would be superfluous; we therefore desire (should your voyage terminate at Jidda), that you endeavour to dispose of such articles of stores as you are not in want of; but should you arrive at Suez, let them remain till your return to Mocha, and there, if you have an opportunity to dispose of them for the advantage of the concerned, we desired it may be done.

"Should any of the officers be good draughtsmen, we desire you will encourage them to make draughts of every thing remarkable in the Red Sea, and we will make them an acknowledgment for their trouble; but we recommend that every remark, draught, or drawing of the passage, may be collected together for the

governor's * perusal; and we hope you will take proper care that, on your return, nothing transpire till the governor's sentiments are known. Should Mr Shaw be obliged to stay with the goods at Cairo, you are to let him keep an officer, and any number of lascars he may require, and that you can spare them.

(Signed) CUDBERT THORNHILL.
ROBERT HOLFORD.
DAVID KILLICAN."

Mahomet Bey being about to depart to give battle to his father-in-law, I thought it was no longer convenient for me to stay at Cairo; I went therefore the last time to the Bey, who pressed me very much to go to the camp with him. I was sufficiently cured, however, of any more Don Quixote undertakings. I excused myself, with every mark of gratitude, and profession of attachment; and I shall never forget his last words, as the handsomest thing ever said to me, and in the politest manner. "You won't go," says he, "and be a soldier: What will you do at home? You are not an India merchant?" I said, "No." "Have you no other trade nor occupation but that of travelling?" I said, "That was my occupation." "Ali Bey, my father-in-law," replied he, "often observed there was never such a people as the English; no other nation on earth could be compared to them, and none had so many great men in all professions, by sea and land: I never understood this till now; that I see it must be so, when your

* Mr Hastings, here alluded to, with these memorandums and instructions, dispatched the Swallow packet to the Red Sea.

king cannot find other employment for such a man as you, but sending him to perish by hunger and thirst in the sands, or to have his throat cut by the lawless barbarians of the desert."

I saw that the march of the Bey was a signal for all Egypt's being presently in disorder, and I did not delay a moment to set out for Alexandria, where I arrived without any thing remarkable. There I found my ship ready; and the day after, walking on the quay, I was accosted by a friend of mine, a Turk, a man of some consequence. He told me it was whispered that the Beys had met, and that Ali Bey had been totally defeated, wounded, and taken. "We are friends," says he; "you are a Christian; and this connection of the Bey with the Russians has exasperated the lower sort of people greatly against you all. What is a day or two to you, now you are going at any rate? Be advised; go on board your ship early in the afternoon, and make your captain haul out beyond the Diamond *, for mischief is at hand." My captain was as ready as I; and we accordingly hauled out beyond the Diamond. The weather was so clear, and the wind so directly fair, that, contrary to custom, we set sail that very night, after being witnesses that the mischief had begun, by the number of lights and repeated firings of muskets we heard from the town.

Our vessel sprung a leak off Derna on the coast, where I was once before shipwrecked. The wind being contrary, we put about ship, and stood before it for Cyprus; our vessel filled apace, and we were

* The Diamond is a small rock, just without the harbour of Alexandria; when ships arrive there, they are cleared out, and never molested further by the custom-house.

intending to put a cable round her waist, when the leak was found. A violent storm overtook us the night after. I apprehend our ship was old, and the captain was again much alarmed, but the wind calmed next day. I was exceedingly distressed with the Guinea-worm in my leg, when the captain came and sat down by my bed-side. "Now the matter is over," says he, "will you tell me one thing? it is mere curiosity; I will not let any one know." "Before I tell you," said I, "I dare say you will not. What is it?" "How many of those things, you know," says he, winking, "have you on board?" "Upon the word of a man," said I, "I do not know what you mean." "*Ces Morts!* these dead men! How many have you in these trunks? for last night the crew was going to throw all your boxes overboard." "I can tell you, captain," said I, "that you and they had better been in bed sick of a fever, than been guilty of that unprovoked violence. *Brutal comme un Provençal,* is a proverb even in your own country; I would not wish to have such a confirmation of the truth of it. But there are my keys; in case another gale should come, choose out of my trunks the one that, according to your idea and theirs, is likeliest to have a dead man in it, and then take another; and the first one you find, throw them all overboard." I forced him to open two of the chests; and lucky it was, as I believe; for off the island of Malta we had another violent gale, but which did us no damage. At last, after a passage of about three weeks, we landed happily at Marseilles.

> Nullum numen abest si sit prudentia; sed te,
> Nos facimus, Fortuna, deum, cœloque locamus.
>
> JUVEN.

END OF THE SIXTH VOLUME.

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